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SELECTIONS

FROM

ADDISON'S PAPERS

IN THE

"SPECTATOR."

ESSAY ON "ADDISON."


By LORD MACAULAY.

AS USED IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS OF BOSTON.

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SELECTIONS
FROM
ADDISON'S "SPECTATOR."

VISIT TO WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

*Pallida mors æquo pulsat pede pauperum tabernas
Regumque turres, O beate Sexti!
Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam.
Jam te premet nox, fabulæque manes,
Et domus exilis Plutonia.* HOR. OD. i. 4. 13.

With equal foot, rich friend, impartial Fate
Knocks at the cottage, and the palace gate:
Life's span forbids thee to extend thy cares,
And stretch thy hopes beyond thy years:
Night soon will seize, and you must quickly go
To storied ghosts, and Pluto's house below. CREECH.

WHEN I am in a serious humor, I very often walk by myself in Westminster Abbey; where the gloominess of the place, and the use to which it is applied, with the solemnity of the building, and the condition of the people who lie in it, are apt to fill the mind with a kind of melancholy, or rather thoughtfulness, that is not disagreeable. I yesterday passed a whole

afternoon in the churchyard, the cloisters, and the church, amusing myself with the tombstones and inscriptions that I met with in those several regions of the dead. Most of them recorded nothing else of the buried person, but that he was born upon one day, and died upon another; the whole history of his life being comprehended in those two circumstances that are common to all mankind. I could not but look upon these registers of existence, whether of brass or marble, as a kind of satire upon the departed persons; who had left no other memorial of them, but that they were born, and that they died. They put me in mind of several persons mentioned in the battles of heroic poems, who have sounding names given them, for no other reason but that they may be killed, and are celebrated for nothing but being knocked on the head.

Γλαῦκόν τε, Μέδοντά τε, Θερσίλοχόν τε.

HOM. IL. p. 216.

Glaucumque, Medontaque, Thersilochumque.

VIRG.

Glaucus, and Medon, and Thersilochus.

The life of these men is finely described in holy writ by "the path of an arrow," which is immediately closed up and lost.

✕ Upon my going into the church, I entertained myself with the digging of a grave; and saw in every shovel-full of it that was thrown up, the fragment of a bone or skull intermixed with a kind of fresh mouldering earth that some time or other had a place in the composition of a human body. Upon this I be-

gan to consider with myself, what innumerable multitudes of people lay confused together under the pavement of that ancient cathedral; how men and women, friends and enemies, priests and soldiers, monks and prebendaries, were crumbled amongst one another, and blended together in the same common mass; how beauty, strength, and youth, with old age, weakness, and deformity, lay undistinguished in the same promiscuous heap of matter.

After having thus surveyed this great magazine of mortality, as it were in the lump, I examined it more particularly by the accounts which I found on several of the monuments which are raised in every quarter of that ancient fabric. Some of them were covered with such extravagant epitaphs, that if it were possible for the dead person to be acquainted with them, he would blush at the praises which his friends have bestowed upon him. There are others so excessively modest, that they deliver the character of the person departed in Greek or Hebrew, and by that means are not understood once in a twelve-month. In the poetical quarter I found there were poets who had no monuments, and monuments which had no poets. I observed, indeed, that the present war had filled the church with many of these uninhabited monuments, which had been erected to the memory of persons whose bodies were perhaps buried in the plains of Blenheim, or in the bosom of the ocean.

I could not but be very much delighted with several modern epitaphs, which are written with great

elegance of expression and justness of thought, and therefore do honor to the living as well as the dead. As a foreigner is very apt to conceive an idea of the ignorance or politeness of a nation from the turn of their public monuments and inscriptions, they should be submitted to the perusal of men of learning and genius before they are put in execution. Sir Cloudesley Shovel's monument has very often given me great offence. Instead of the brave rough English admiral, which was the distinguishing character of that plain gallant man, he is represented on his tomb by the figure of a beau, dressed in a long periwig, and reposing himself upon velvet cushions, under a canopy of state. The inscription is answerable to the monument; for instead of celebrating the many remarkable actions he had performed in the service of his country, it acquaints us only with the manner of his death, in which it was impossible for him to reap any honor. The Dutch, whom we are apt to despise for want of genius, show an infinitely greater taste of antiquity and politeness in their buildings and works of this nature, than what we meet with in those of our own country. The monuments of their admirals, which have been erected at the public expense, represent them like themselves, and are adorned with rostral crowns and naval ornaments, with beautiful festoons of sea-weed, shells, and coral.

But to return to our subject. I have left the repository of our English kings for the contemplation of another day, when I shall find my mind disposed for so serious an amusement. I know that entertain-

ments of this nature are apt to raise dark and dismal thoughts in timorous minds, and gloomy imaginations; but for my own part, though I am always serious, I do not know what it is to be melancholy; and can therefore take a view of nature, in her deep and solemn scenes, with the same pleasure as in her most gay and delightful ones. By this means I can improve myself with those objects which others consider with terror. \When I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies in me; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone, my heart melts with compassion; when I see the tomb of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow. When I see kings lying by those who deposed them, when I consider rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men that divided the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the little competitions, factions, and debates of mankind. When I read the several dates of the tombs, of some that died yesterday, and some six hundred years ago, I consider that great day when we shall all of us be contemporaries and make our appearance together. \

PUNNING.

*Non equidem hoc studeo bullatis ut mihi nugis
Pagina turgescat, dare pondus idonea fumo.*

PERS. SAT. V. 19.

'Tis not indeed my talent to engage
In lofty trifles, or to swell my page
With wind and noise.

DRYDEN.

THERE is no kind of false wit which has been so recommended by the practice of all ages, as that which consists in a jingle of words, and is comprehended under the general name of punning. It is indeed impossible to kill a weed which the soil has a natural disposition to produce. The seeds of punning are in the minds of all men; and though they may be subdued by reason, reflection, and good sense, they will be very apt to shoot up in the greatest genius that is not broken and cultivated by the rules of art. Imitation is natural to us, and when it does not raise the mind to poetry, painting, music, or other more noble arts, it often breaks out in puns and quibbles.

Aristotle, in the eleventh chapter of his book of rhetoric, describes two or three kinds of puns, which he calls paragrams, among the beauties of good writing, and produces instances of them out of some of the greatest authors in the Greek tongue. Cicero

has sprinkled several of his works with puns, and in his book where he lays down the rules of oratory, quotes abundance of sayings as pieces of wit, which also upon examination prove arrant puns. But the age in which the pun chiefly flourished, was in the reign of King James I. That learned monarch was himself a tolerable punster, and made very few bishops or privy-counsellors that had not some time or other signalized themselves by a clinch, or a conundrum. It was therefore in this age that the pun appeared with pomp and dignity. It had been before admitted into merry speeches and ludicrous compositions, but was now delivered with great gravity from the pulpit, or pronounced in the most solemn manner at the council-table. The greatest authors, in their most serious works, made frequent use of puns. The sermons of Bishop Andrews, and the tragedies of Shakespeare, are full of them. The sinner was punned into repentance by the former, as in the latter nothing is more usual than to see a hero weeping and quibbling for a dozen lines together.

I must add to these great authorities, which seem to have given a kind of sanction to this piece of false wit, that all the writers of rhetoric have treated of punning with very great respect, and divided the several kinds of it into hard names, that are reckoned among the figures of speech, and recommended as ornaments in discourse. I remember a country schoolmaster of my acquaintance told me once, that he had been in company with a gentleman whom he looked upon to be the greatest paragrammatist among

the moderns. Upon inquiry, I found my learned friend had dined that day with Mr. Swan, the famous punster; and desiring him to give me some account of Mr. Swan's conversation, he told me that he generally talked in the *Paranomasia*, that he sometimes gave into the *Plocé*, but that in his humble opinion he shined most in the *Antanaclasis*.

I must not here omit, that a famous university of this land was formerly very much infested with puns; but whether or no this might not arise from the fens and marshes in which it was situated, and which are now drained, I must leave to the determination of more skilful naturalists.

After this short history of punning, one would wonder how it should be so entirely banished out of the learned world as it is at present, especially since it had found a place in the writings of the most ancient polite authors. To account for this we must consider, that the first race of authors, who were the great heroes in writing, were destitute of all rules and arts of criticism; and for that reason, though they excel later writers in greatness of genius, they fall short of them in accuracy and correctness. The moderns cannot reach their beauties, but can avoid their imperfections. When the world was furnished with these authors of the first eminence, there grew up another set of writers, who gained themselves a reputation by the remarks which they made on the works of those who preceded them. It was one of the employments of these secondary authors to distinguish the several kinds of wit by terms of art,

and to consider them as more or less perfect, according as they were founded in truth. It is no wonder, therefore, that even such authors as Isocrates, Plato, and Cicero, should have such little blemishes as are not to be met with in authors of a much inferior character, who have written since those several blemishes were discovered. I do not find that there was a proper separation made between puns and true wit by any of the ancient authors, except Quintilian and Longinus. ^{alter 2130} But when this distinction was once settled, it was very natural for all men of sense to agree in it. ^{bring in wit} As for the revival of this false wit, it happened about the time of the revival of letters; but as soon as it was once detected, it immediately vanished and disappeared. At the same time there is no question, but as it has sunk in one age and rose in another, it will again recover itself in some distant period of time, as pedantry and ignorance shall prevail upon wit and sense. And, to speak the truth, I do very much apprehend, by some of the last winter's productions, which had their sets of admirers, that our posterity will in a few years degenerate into a race of punsters; at least, a man may be very excusable for any apprehensions of this kind, that has seen acrostics handed about the town with great secrecy and applause; to which I must also add a little epigram called the Witches Prayer, that fell into verse when it was read either backward or forward, excepting only that it cursed one way, and blessed the other. When one sees there are actually such painstakingers among our British wits, who can tell

what it may end in? If we must lash one another, let it be with the manly strokes of wit and satire; for I am of the old philosopher's opinion, that if I must suffer from one or the other, I would rather it should be from the paw of a lion, than from the hoof of an ass. I do not speak this out of any spirit of party. There is a most crying dulness on both sides. I have seen tory acrostics and whig anagrams, and do not quarrel with either of them because they are whigs or tories, but because they are anagrams and acrostics.

But to return to punning. Having pursued the history of a pun, from its original to its downfall, I shall here define it to be a conceit arising from the use of two words that agree in the sound, but differ in the sense. The only way therefore to try a piece of wit, is to translate it into a different language. If it bears the test, you may pronounce it true; but if it vanishes in the experiment, you may conclude it to have been a pun. In short, one may say of a pun, as the countryman described his nightingale, that it is *vox et præterea nihil*, "a sound, and nothing but a sound." On the contrary, one may represent true wit by the description which Aristenetus makes of a fine woman; when she is dressed she is beautiful, when she is undressed she is beautiful; or as Mercerus has translated it more emphatically, "*Induitur formosa est : exuitur, ipsa forma est.*" *

C

* Dressed she is beautiful, undressed she is Beauty's self.

VISIT TO THE ROYAL EXCHANGE.

*Hic segetes, illic veniunt felicius uvæ :
 Arborei fætus alibi, atque injussa vire cunt
 Gramina. Nonne vides, croceos ut Tmolus odores,
 India mittit ebur, molles sua thura Sabæi ?
 At Chalybes nudi ferrum, virosaque Pontus
 Castorea, Eliadum palmas Epirus equarum.
 Continuo has leges æternaque fœdera certis
 Imposuit Natura locis.* VIRG. GEORG. i. 54.

This ground with Bacchus, that with Ceres, suits ;
 That other loads the trees with happy fruits ;
 A fourth with grass, unbidden, decks the ground :
 Thus Tmolus is with yellow saffron crowned ;
 India, black ebon and white iv'ry bears ;
 And soft Idume weeps her od'rous tears :
 Thus Pontus sends her beaver-stones from far ;
 And naked Spaniards temper steel for war :
 Epirus, for th' Elean chariot, breeds
 In hopes of palms, a race of running steeds.
 This is th' orig'nal contract ; these the laws
 Imposed by Nature, and by Nature's cause. DRYDEN.

THERE is no place in the town which I so much love to frequent as the Royal Exchange. It gives me a secret satisfaction, and in some measure gratifies my vanity, as I am an Englishman, to see so rich an assembly of countrymen and foreigners, consulting together upon the private business of mankind, and making this metropolis a kind of emporium for the whole earth. I must confess I look upon

high-change to be a great council, in which all considerable nations have their representatives. Factors in the trading world are what ambassadors are in the politic world; they negotiate affairs, conclude treaties, and maintain a good correspondence between those wealthy societies of men that are divided from one another by seas and oceans, or live on the different extremities of a continent. I have often been pleased to hear disputes adjusted between an inhabitant of Japan and an alderman of London, or to see a subject of the Great Mogul entering into a league with one of the Czar of Muscovy. I am infinitely delighted in mixing with these several ministers of commerce, as they are distinguished by their different walks and different languages. Sometimes I am jostled among a body of Armenians; sometimes I am lost in a crowd of Jews; and sometimes make one in a group of Dutchmen. I am a Dane, Swede, or Frenchman at different times; or rather fancy myself like the old philosopher, who upon being asked what countryman he was, replied, that he was a citizen of the world.

Though I very frequently visit this busy multitude of people, I am known to nobody there but my friend Sir Andrew, who often smiles upon me as he sees me bustling in the crowd, but at the same time connives at my presence without taking any further notice of me. There is indeed a merchant of Egypt, who just knows me by sight, having formerly remitted me some money to Grand Cairo; but as I am not

versed in the modern Coptic, our conferences go no further than a bow and a grimace.

This grand scene of business gives me an infinite variety of solid and substantial entertainments. As I am a great lover of mankind, my heart naturally overflows with pleasure at the sight of a prosperous and happy multitude, insomuch that at many public solemnities I cannot forbear expressing my joy with tears that have stolen down my cheeks. For this reason I am wonderfully delighted to see such a body of men thriving in their own private fortunes, and at the same time promoting the public stock; or in other words, raising estates for their own families, by bringing into their country whatever is wanting, and carrying out of it whatever is superfluous.

Nature seems to have taken a particular care to disseminate her blessings among the different regions of the world, with an eye to this mutual intercourse and traffic among mankind, that the natives of the several parts of the globe might have a kind of dependence upon one another, and be united together by their common interest. Almost every degree produces something peculiar to it. The food often grows in one country, and the sauce in another. The fruits of Portugal are corrected by the products of Barbadoes; the infusion of a China plant is sweetened by the pith of an Indian cane. The Philippine Islands give a flavor to our European bowls. The single dress of a woman of quality is often the product of a hundred climates. The muff and the fan come together from the different ends of the earth.

The scarf is sent from the torrid zone, and the tippet from beneath the pole. The brocade petticoat rises out of the mines of Peru, and the diamond necklace out of the bowels of Hindostan.

If we consider our own country in its natural prospect, without any of the benefits and advantages of commerce, what a barren uncomfortable spot of earth falls to our share ! Natural historians tell us that no fruit grows originally among us, besides hips and haws, acorns and pignuts, with other delicacies of the like nature ; that our climate of itself, and without the assistances of art, can make no further advances towards a plum than to a sloe, and carries an apple to no greater perfection than a crab ; that our melons, our peaches, our figs, our apricots, and cherries, are strangers among us, imported in different ages, and naturalized in our English gardens ; and that they would all degenerate and fall away into the trash of our own country, if they were wholly neglected by the planter, and left to the mercy of our sun and soil. Nor has traffic more enriched our vegetable world, than it has improved the whole face of nature among us. Our ships are laden with the harvest of every climate. Our tables are stored with spices, and oils, and wines. Our rooms are filled with pyramids of China, and adorned with the workmanship of Japan. Our morning's draught comes to us from the remotest corners of the earth. We repair our bodies by the drugs of America, and repose ourselves under Indian canopies. My friend, Sir Andrew, calls the vineyards of France our gardens ; the

spice-islands, our hot-beds; the Persians, our silk-weavers, and the Chinese our potters. Nature indeed furnishes us with the bare necessities of life, but traffic gives us a great variety of what is useful, and at the same time supplies us with everything that is convenient and ornamental. Nor is it the least part of this our happiness, that whilst we enjoy the remotest products of the north and south, we are free from those extremities of weather which gave them birth; that our eyes are refreshed with the green fields of Britain, at the same time that our palates are feasted with fruits that rise between the tropics.

For these reasons there are not more useful members in a commonwealth than merchants. They knit mankind together in a mutual intercourse of good offices, distribute the gifts of nature, find work for the poor, add wealth to the rich, and magnificence to the great. Our English merchant converts the tin of his own country into gold, and exchanges its wool for rubies. The Mahometans are clothed in our British manufacture, and the inhabitants of the frozen zone warmed with fleeces of our sheep.

When I have been upon the 'Change, I have often fancied one of our old kings standing in person, where he is represented in effigy, and looking down upon the wealthy concourse of people with which that place is every day filled. In this case, how would he be surprised to hear all the languages of Europe spoken in this little spot of his former dominions, and to see so many private men, who in his

time would have been the vassals of some powerful baron, negotiating like princes for greater sums of money than were formerly to be met with in the royal treasury ! Trade, without enlarging the British territories, has given us a kind of additional empire. It has multiplied the number of the rich, made our landed estates infinitely more valuable than they were formerly, and added to them an accession of other estates as valuable as the lands themselves.



WAYS OF FILLING UP TIME.

Spatio brevi

Spem longam reseces : dum loquimur, fugerit invida

Ætas : carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero.

HOR. OD. i. 11. 6.

Thy lengthened hope with prudence bound,

Proportioned to the flying hour :

While thus we talk in careless ease,

Our envious minutes wing their flight ;

Then swift the fleeting pleasures seize,

Nor trust to-morrow's doubtful light.

FRANCIS.

WE all of us complain of the shortness of time, saith Seneca, and yet have much more than we know what to do with. Our lives, says he, are spent either in doing nothing at all, or in doing nothing to the purpose, or in doing nothing that we ought to do. We are always complaining our days are few, and acting as though there would be no end of them.

That noble philosopher has described our inconsistency with ourselves in this particular, by all those various turns of expression and thought which are peculiar to his writings.

I often consider mankind as wholly inconsistent with itself in a point that bears some affinity to the former. Though we seem grieved at the shortness of life in general, we are wishing every period of it at an end. The minor longs to be at age, then to be a man of business, then to make up an estate, then to arrive at honors, then to retire. Thus, although the whole of life is allowed by every one to be short, the several divisions of it appear long and tedious. We are for lengthening our span in general, but would fain contract the parts of which it is composed. The usurer would be very well satisfied to have all the time annihilated that lies between the present moment and next quarter-day. The politician would be contented to lose three years in his life, could he place things in the posture which he fancies they will stand in after such a revolution of time. The lover would be glad to strike out of his existence all the moments that are to pass away before the happy meeting. Thus, as fast as our time runs, we should be very glad in most parts of our lives that it ran much faster than it does. Several hours of the day hang upon our hands, nay we wish away whole years; and travel through time as through a country filled with many wild and empty wastes, which we would fain hurry over, that we may arrive at those several little settlements or imaginary points of rest which are dispersed up and down in it.

If we divide the life of most men into twenty parts, we shall find that at least nineteen of them are mere gaps and chasms, which are neither filled with pleasure nor business. I do not however include in this calculation the life of those men who are in a perpetual hurry of affairs; but of those only who are not always engaged in scenes of action; and I hope I shall not do an unacceptable piece of service to these persons, if I point out to them certain methods for the filling up their empty spaces of life. The methods I shall propose to them are as follow.

The first is the exercise of virtue, in the most general acceptation of the word. That particular scheme which comprehends the social virtues, may give employment to the most industrious temper, and find a man in business more than the most active station of life. To advise the ignorant, relieve the needy, comfort the afflicted, are duties that fall in our way almost every day of our lives. A man has frequent opportunities of mitigating the fierceness of a party; of doing justice to the character of a deserving man; of softening the envious, quieting the angry, and rectifying the prejudiced; which are all of them employments suited to a reasonable nature, and bring great satisfaction to the person who can busy himself in them with discretion.

There is another kind of virtue that may find employment for those retired hours in which we are altogether left to ourselves, and destitute of company and conversation; I mean that intercourse and communication which every reasonable creature ought

to maintain with the great Author of his being. The man who lives under an habitual sense of the Divine presence keeps up a perpetual cheerfulness of temper, and enjoys every moment the satisfaction of thinking himself in company with his dearest and best of friends. The time never lies heavy upon him; it is impossible for him to be alone. His thoughts and passions are the most busied at such hours when those of other men are the most unactive. He no sooner steps out of the world but his heart burns with devotion, swells with hope, and triumphs in the consciousness of that Presence which everywhere surrounds him; or, on the contrary, pours out its fears, its sorrows, its apprehensions, to the great Supporter of its existence.

I have here only considered the necessity of a man's being virtuous, that he may have something to do; but if we consider further, that the exercise of virtue is not only an amusement for the time it lasts, but that its influence extends to those parts of our existence which lie beyond the grave, and that our whole eternity is to take its color from those hours which we here employ in virtue or in vice, the argument redoubles upon us for putting in practice this method of passing away our time.

When a man has but a little stock to improve, and has opportunities of turning it all to good account, what shall we think of him if he suffers nineteen parts of it to lie dead, and perhaps employs even the twentieth to his ruin or disadvantage? But because the mind cannot be always in its fervors, nor

strained up to a pitch of virtue, it is necessary to find out proper employments for it in its relaxations.

The next method, therefore, that I would propose to fill up our time, should be useful and innocent diversions. I must confess I think it is below reasonable creatures to be altogether conversant in such diversions as are merely innocent, and have nothing else to recommend them but that there is no hurt in them. Whether any kind of gaming has even thus much to say for itself, I shall not determine; but I think it is very wonderful to see persons of the best sense passing away a dozen hours together in shuffling and dividing a pack of cards, with no other conversation but what is made up of a few game phrases, and no other ideas but those of black or red spots ranged together in different figures. Would not a man laugh to hear any one of this species complaining that life is short?

The stage might be made a perpetual source of the most noble and useful entertainments, were it under proper regulations. ✕

But the mind never unbends itself so agreeably as in the conversation of a well-chosen friend. There is indeed no blessing of life that is any way comparable to the enjoyment of a discreet and virtuous friend. It eases and unloads the mind, clears and improves the understanding, engenders thoughts and knowledge, animates virtue and good resolutions, soothes and allays the passions, and finds employment for most of the vacant hours of life.

Next to such an intimacy with a particular person,

one would endeavor after a more general conversation with such as are able to entertain and improve those with whom they converse, which are qualifications that seldom go asunder.

There are many other useful amusements of life which one would endeavor to multiply, that one might on all occasions have recourse to something, rather than suffer the mind to lie idle, or run adrift with any passion that chances to rise in it.

A man that has a taste of music, painting, or architecture, is like one that has another sense, when compared with such as have no relish of those arts. The florist, the planter, the gardener, the husbandman, when they are only as accomplishments to the man of fortune, are great reliefs to a country life, and many ways useful to those who are possessed of them.

But of all the diversions of life, there is none so proper to fill up its empty spaces as the reading of useful and entertaining authors. But this I shall only touch upon, because it in some measure interferes with the third method, which I shall propose in another paper, for the employment of our dead unactive hours, and which I shall only mention in general to be the pursuit of knowledge.

THE TRUE CHARACTER OF GREAT MEN,
DRAWN AFTER THEIR DEATH.

*Romulus, et Liber pater, et cum Castore Pollux,
Post ingentia facta, deorum in templa recepti ;
Dum terras hominumque colunt genus, aspera bella
Componunt, agros assignant, oppida condunt ;
Ploravere suis non respondere favorem
Speratum meritis.*

HOR. EPIST. ii. 1. 5.

IMITATED.

Edward and Henry, now the boast of fame,
And virtuous Alfred, a more sacred name,
After a life of generous toils endured,
The Gaul subdued, or property secured,
Ambition humbled, mighty cities stormed,
Or laws established, and the world reformed ;
Closed their long glories with a sigh to find
Th' unwilling gratitude of base mankind.

POPE.

“CENSURE,” says a late ingenious author, “is the tax a man pays to the public for being eminent.” It is a folly for an eminent man to think of escaping it, and a weakness to be affected with it. All the illustrious persons of antiquity, and indeed of every age in the world, have passed through this fiery persecution. There is no defence against reproach but obscurity ; it is a kind of concomitant to greatness, as satires and invectives were an essential part of a Roman triumph.

If men of eminence are exposed to censure on one hand, they are as much liable to flattery on the other. If they receive reproaches which are not due to them, they likewise receive praises which they do not deserve. In a word, the man in a high post is never regarded with an indifferent eye, but always considered as a friend or an enemy. For this reason persons in great stations have seldom their true characters drawn till several years after their deaths. Their personal friendships and enmities must cease, and the parties they were engaged in be at an end, before their faults or their virtues can have justice done them. When writers have the least opportunity of knowing the truth, they are in the best disposition to tell it.

It is therefore the privilege of posterity to adjust the characters of illustrious persons, and to set matters right between those antagonists, who, by their rivalry for greatness, divided a whole age into factions. We can now allow Cæsar to be a great man, without derogating from Pompey; and celebrate the virtues of Cato, without detracting from those of Cæsar. Every one that has been long dead has a due proportion of praise allotted him, in which, whilst he lived, his friends were too profuse, and his enemies too sparing.

According to Sir Isaac Newton's calculations, the last comet that made its appearance in 1680, imbibed so much heat by its approaches to the sun, that it would have been two thousand times hotter than red-hot iron, had it been a globe of that metal; and that

supposing it as big as the earth, and at the same distance from the sun, it would be fifty thousand years in cooling, before it recovered its natural temper. In the like manner, if an Englishman considers the great ferment into which our political world is thrown at present, and how intensely it is heated in all its parts, he cannot suppose that it will cool again in less than three hundred years. In such a tract of time it is possible that the heats of the present age may be extinguished, and our several classes of great men represented under their proper characters. Some eminent historian may then probably arise that will not write *recentibus odiis*, as Tacitus expresses it, with the passions and prejudices of a contemporary author, but make an impartial distribution of fame among the great men of the present age.

I cannot forbear entertaining myself very often with the idea of such an imaginary historian describing the reign of Anne the first, and introducing it with a preface to his reader, that he is now entering upon the most shining part of the English story. The great rivals in fame will be then distinguished according to their respective merits, and shine in their proper points of light. Such a one, says the historian, though variously represented by the writers of his own age, appears to have been a man of more than ordinary abilities, great application, and uncommon integrity: nor was such a one, though of an opposite party and interest, inferior to him in any of these respects. The several antagonists who now

endeavor to depreciate one another, and are celebrated or traduced by different parties, will then have the same body of admirers, and appear illustrious in the opinion of the whole British nation. The deserving man, who can now recommend himself to the esteem of but half his countrymen, will then receive the approbations and applauses of a whole age.

Among the several persons that flourish in this glorious reign, there is no question but such a future historian, as the person of whom I am speaking, will make mention of the men of genius and learning, who have now any figure in the British nation. For my own part, I often flatter myself with the honorable mention which will then be made of me; and have drawn up a paragraph in my own imagination, that I fancy will not be altogether unlike what will be found in some page or other of this imaginary historian.

It was under this reign, says he, that the Spectator published those little diurnal essays which are still extant. We know very little of the name or person of this author, except only that he was a man of a very short face, extremely addicted to silence, and so great a lover of knowledge, that he made a voyage to Grand Cairo for no other reason but to take the measure of a pyramid. His chief friend was one Sir Roger de Coverley, a whimsical country knight, and a Templar, whose name he has not transmitted to us. He lived as a lodger at the house of a widow-woman, and was a great humorist in all parts of his life. This is all we can affirm with any cer-

tainty of his person and character. As for his speculations, notwithstanding the several obsolete words and obscure phrases of the age in which he lived, we still understand enough of them to see the diversions and characters of the English nation in his time; not but that we are to make allowance for the mirth and humor of the author, who has doubtless strained many representations of things beyond the truth. For if we interpret his words in their literal meaning, we must suppose that women of the first quality used to pass away whole mornings at a puppet-show; that they attested their principles by their patches; that an audience would sit out an evening, to hear a dramatical performance written in a language which they did not understand; that chairs and flower-pots were introduced as actors upon the British stage; that a promiscuous assembly of men and women were allowed to meet at midnight in masks within the verge of the court; with many improbabilities of the like nature. We must therefore, in these and the like cases, suppose that these remote hints and allusions aimed at some certain follies which were then in vogue, and which at present we have not any notion of. We may guess, by several passages in the speculations, that there were writers who endeavored to detract from the works of this author; but as nothing of this nature is come down to us, we cannot guess at any objections that could be made to his paper. If we consider his style with that indulgence which we must show to old English writers, or if we look into the variety of his sub-

jects, with those several critical dissertations, moral reflections,

The following part of the paragraph is so much to my advantage, and beyond anything I can pretend to, that I hope my reader will excuse me for not inserting it.

L



THE "SPECTATOR" AT THE COUNTRY HOUSE OF SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY.

*Hinc tibi copia
Manabit ad plenum, benigno
Ruris honorum opulenta cornu.* HOR. OD. i. 17. 14.

Here plenty's liberal horn shall pour
Of fruits for thee a copious shower,
Rich honors of the quiet plain.

HAVING often received an invitation from my friend Sir Roger de Coverley to pass away a month with him in the country, I last week accompanied him thither, and am settled with him for some time at his country house, where I intend to form several of my ensuing speculations. Sir Roger, who is very well acquainted with my humor, lets me rise and go to bed when I please, dine at his own table or in my chamber as I think fit, sit still and say nothing without bidding me be merry. When the gentlemen of the country come to see him, he only shows me at a distance. As I have been walking in his fields I have

observed them stealing a sight of me over a hedge, and have heard the knight desiring them not to let me see them, for that I hated to be stared at.

I am the more at ease in Sir Roger's family, because it consists of sober and staid persons; for as the knight is the best master in the world, he seldom changes his servants; and as he is beloved by all about him, his servants never care for leaving him; by this means his domestics are all in years, and grown old with their master. You would take his valet de chambre for his brother, his butler is gray-headed, his groom is one of the gravest men that I have ever seen, and his coachman has the looks of a privy-counsellor. You see the goodness of the master even in the old house-dog, and in a gray pad that is kept in the stable with great care and tenderness out of regard to his past services, though he has been useless for several years.

I could not but observe with a great deal of pleasure the joy that appeared in the countenances of these ancient domestics upon my friend's arrival at his country seat. Some of them could not refrain from tears at the sight of their old master; every one of them pressed forward to do something for him, and seemed discouraged if they were not employed. At the same time the good old knight, with a mixture of the father and the master of the family, tempered the inquiries after his own affairs with several kind questions relating to themselves. This humanity and good-nature engages everybody to him, so that when he is pleasant upon any of them,

all his family are in good-humor, and none so much as the person whom he diverts himself with: on the contrary, if he coughs, or betrays any infirmity of old age, it is easy for a stander-by to observe a secret concern in the looks of all his servants.

My worthy friend has put me under the particular care of his butler, who is a very prudent man, and, as well as the rest of his fellow-servants, wonderfully desirous of pleasing me, because they have often heard their master talk of me as of his particular friend.

My chief companion, when Sir Roger is diverting himself in the woods or the fields, is a very venerable man who is ever with Sir Roger, and has lived at his house in the nature of a chaplain above thirty years. This gentleman is a person of good sense and some learning, of a very regular life and obliging conversation: he heartily loves Sir Roger, and knows that he is very much in the old knight's esteem, so that he lives in the family rather as a relation than a dependant.

I have observed in several of my papers, that my friend Sir Roger, amidst all his good qualities, is something of a humorist; and that his virtues, as well as imperfections, are as it were tinged by a certain extravagance, which makes them particularly his, and distinguishes them from those of other men. This cast of mind, as it is generally very innocent in itself, so it renders his conversation highly agreeable, and more delightful than the same degree of sense and virtue would appear in their common and

ordinary colors. As I was walking with him last night, he asked me how I liked the good man whom I have just now mentioned? and without staying for my answer told me, that he was afraid of being insulted with Latin and Greek at his own table; for which reason he desired a particular friend of his at the university to find him out a clergyman rather of plain sense than much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice, a sociable temper, and, if possible, a man that understood a little of backgammon. "My friend," says Sir Roger, "found me out this gentleman, who, besides the endowments required of him, is, they tell me, a good scholar, though he does not show it. I have given him the parsonage of the parish; and because I know his value, have settled upon him a good annuity for life. If he outlives me, he shall find that he was higher in my esteem than perhaps he thinks he is. He has now been with me thirty years; and though he does not know I have taken notice of it, has never in all that time asked anything of me for himself, though he is every day soliciting me for something in behalf of one or other of my tenants, his parishioners. There has not been a lawsuit in the parish since he has lived among them; if any dispute arises they apply themselves to him for the decision; if they do not acquiesce in his judgment, which I think never happened above once or twice at most, they appeal to me. At his first settling with me, I made him a present of all the good sermons which have been printed in English, and only begged of him that every Sunday he would pronounce one of them in the pulpit. Accord-

ingly he has digested them into such a series, that they follow one another naturally, and make a continued system of practical divinity."

As Sir Roger was going on in his story, the gentleman we were talking of came up to us; and upon the knight's asking him who preached to-morrow, for it was Saturday night, told us, the bishop of St. Asaph * in the morning, and Dr. South in the afternoon. He then showed us his list of preachers for the whole year, where I saw, with a great deal of pleasure, Archbishop Tillotson, Bishop Saunderson, Dr. Barrow, Dr. Calamy, with several living authors who have published discourses of practical divinity. I no sooner saw this venerable man in the pulpit, but I very much approved of my friend's insisting upon the qualifications of a good aspect and a clear voice; for I was so charmed with the gracefulness of his figure and delivery, as well as the discourses he pronounced, that I think I never passed any time more to my satisfaction. A sermon repeated after this manner, is like the composition of a poet in the mouth of a graceful actor.

I could heartily wish that more of our country clergy would follow this example; and instead of wasting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own, would endeavor after a handsome elocution, and all those other talents that are proper to enforce what has been penned by greater masters. This would not only be more easy to themselves, but more edifying to the people.

L

* Dr. William Fleetwood.

THE "SPECTATOR" AT THE COUNTY ASSIZES WITH SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY.

Comes jucundus in via pro vehiculo est.

PUBL. SYR. FRAG.

An agreeable companion upon the road is as good as a coach.

A MAN'S first care should be to avoid the reproaches of his own heart; his next, to escape the censures of the world. If the last interferes with the former, it ought to be entirely neglected; but otherwise there cannot be a greater satisfaction to an honest mind than to see those approbations which it gives itself seconded by the applauses of the public. A man is more sure of his conduct when the verdict which he passes upon his own behavior is thus warranted and confirmed by the opinion of all that know him.

My worthy friend Sir Roger is one of those who is not only at piece within himself, but beloved and esteemed by all about him. He receives a suitable tribute for his universal benevolence to mankind, in the returns of affection and good-will, which are paid him by every one that lives within his neighborhood. I lately met with two or three odd instances of that general respect which is shown to the good old knight. He would needs carry Will Wimble and

myself with him into the county assizes. As we were upon the road Will Wimble joined a couple of plain men who rid before us, and conversed with them for some time; during which my friend Sir Roger acquainted me with their characters.

“The first of them,” says he, “that has a spaniel by his side, is a yeoman of about a hundred pounds a year, an honest man. He is just within the game-act, and qualified to kill a hare or a pheasant. He knocks down a dinner with his gun twice or thrice a week; and by that means lives much cheaper than those who have not so good an estate as himself. He would be a good neighbor if he did not destroy so many partridges. In short, he is a very sensible man; shoots flying, and has been several times foreman of the petit jury.

“The other that rides along with him is Tom Touchy, a fellow famous for ‘taking the law’ of everybody. There is not one in the town where he lives that he has not sued at a quarter sessions. The rogue had once the impudence to go to law with the Widow. His head is full of costs, damages, and ejections. He plagued a couple of honest gentlemen so long for a trespass in breaking one of his hedges, till he was forced to sell the ground it inclosed to defray the charges of the prosecution; his father left him fourscore pounds a year; but he has cast and been cast so often, that he is not now worth thirty. I suppose he is going upon the old business of the willow-tree.”

As Sir Roger was giving me this account of Tom

Touchy, Will Wimble and his two companions stopped short till we came up to them. After having paid their respects to Sir Roger, Will told him that Mr. Touchy and he must appeal to him upon a dispute that arose between them. Will, it seems, had been giving his fellow-travellers an account of his angling one day in such a hole: when Tom Touchy, instead of hearing out his story, told him that Mr. Such-a-One, if he pleased, might "take the law of him, for fishing in that part of the river." My friend Sir Roger heard them both, upon a round trot; and after having paused some time told them with the air of a man who would not give his judgment rashly, that "much might be said on both sides." They were neither of them dissatisfied with the knight's determination, because neither of them found himself in the wrong by it. Upon which we made the best of our way to the assizes.

The court was sat before Sir Roger came; but notwithstanding all the justices had taken their places upon the bench, they made room for the old knight at the head of them; who, for his reputation in the country, took occasion to whisper in the judge's ear that he was glad his lordship had met with so much good weather in his circuit. I was listening to the proceedings of the court with much attention, and infinitely pleased with that great appearance of solemnity which so properly accompanies such a public administration of our laws; when, after about an hour's sitting, I observed, to my great surprise, in the midst of a trial, that my friend Sir Roger was

getting up to speak. I was in some pain for him, till I found he had acquitted himself of two or three sentences, with a look of much business and great intrepidity.

Upon his first rising the court was hushed, and a general whisper ran among the country people, that Sir Roger "was up." The speech he made was so little to the purpose, that I shall not trouble my readers with an account of it; and I believe was not so much designed by the knight himself to inform the court, as to give him a figure in my eye, and keep up his credit in the country.

I was highly delighted, when the court rose, to see the gentlemen of the country gathering about my old friend, and striving who should compliment him most; at the same time that the ordinary people gazed upon him at a distance, not a little admiring his courage, that was not afraid to speak to the judge.

In our return home we met with a very odd accident; which I cannot forbear relating, because it shows how desirous all who know Sir Roger are of giving him marks of their esteem. When we were arrived upon the verge of his estate, we stopped at a little inn to rest ourselves and our horses. The man of the house had, it seems, been formerly a servant in the knight's family; and to do honor to his old master, had some time since, unknown to Sir Roger, put him up in a sign-post before the door; so that the knight's head had hung out upon the road about a week before he himself knew anything

of the matter. As soon as Sir Roger was acquainted with it, finding that his servant's indiscretion proceeded wholly from affection and good-will, he only told him that he had made him too high a compliment; and when the fellow seemed to think that could hardly be, added with a more decisive look, that it was too great an honor for any man under a duke; but told him at the same time, that it might be altered with a very few touches, and that he himself would be at the charge of it. Accordingly they got a painter by the knight's directions to add a pair of whiskers to the face, and, by a little aggravation of the features, to change it into the Saracen's Head. I should not have known this story had not the inn-keeper, upon Sir Roger's alighting, told him in my hearing, that his Honor's head was brought back last night with the alterations that he had ordered to be made in it. Upon this my friend, with his usual cheerfulness, related the particulars above mentioned, and ordered the head to be brought into the room. I could not forbear discovering greater expressions of mirth than ordinary upon the appearance of this monstrous face, under which, notwithstanding it was made to frown and stare in a most extraordinary manner, I could still discover a distant resemblance of my old friend. Sir Roger, upon seeing me laugh, desired me to tell him truly if I thought it possible for people to know him in that disguise. I at first kept my usual silence; but upon the knight's conjuring me to tell him whether it was not still more like himself than a Saracen, I composed my countenance

in the best manner I could, and replied, that "much might be said on both sides."

These several adventures, with the knight's behavior in them, gave me as pleasant a day as ever I met with in any of my travels.

L



BREVITY OF THE ENGLISH TONGUE.

Est brevitatis opus, ut currat sententia.

HOR. SAT. i. 10. 9.

Let brevity dispatch the rapid thought.

I HAVE somewhere read of an eminent person, who used in his private offices of devotion to give thanks to heaven that he was born a Frenchman; for my own part, I look upon it as a peculiar blessing that I was born an Englishman. Among many other reasons, I think myself very happy in my country, as the language of it is wonderfully adapted to a man who is sparing of his words, and an enemy to loquacity.

As I have frequently reflected on my good fortune in this particular, I shall communicate to the public my speculations upon the English tongue, not doubting but they will be acceptable to all my curious readers.

The English delight in silence more than any other European nation, if the remarks which are made on us by foreigners are true. Our discourse is not kept up in conversation, but falls into more pauses and

intervals than in our neighboring countries; as it is observed, that the matter of our writings is thrown much closer together, and lies in a narrower compass than is usual in the works of foreign authors; for, to favor our natural taciturnity, when we are obliged to utter our thoughts, we do it in the shortest way we are able, and give as quick a birth to our conceptions as possible. *extract or reserve* *thoughts*

This humor shows itself in several remarks that we may make upon the English language. As first of all by its abounding in monosyllables, which gives us an opportunity of delivering our thoughts in few sounds. This indeed takes off from the elegance of our tongue, but at the same time expresses our ideas in the readiest manner, and consequently answers the first design of speech better than the multitude of syllables, which make the words of other languages more tunable and sonorous. *easy to be heard* The sounds of our English words are commonly like those of string music, short and transient, which rise and perish upon a single touch; those of other languages are like the notes of wind instruments, sweet and swelling, and lengthened out into variety of modulation. *melody*

In the next place we may observe, that where the words are not monosyllables, we often make them so, as much as lies in our power, by our rapidity of pronunciation; as it generally happens in most of our long words which are derived from the Latin, where we contract the length of the syllables that gives them a grave and solemn air in their own language, to make them more proper for dispatch, and more

conformable to the genius of our tongue. This we may find in a multitude of words, as “liberty, conspiracy, theatre, orator,” &c.

The same natural aversion to loquacity has of late years made a very considerable alteration in our language, by closing in one syllable the termination of our preterperfect tense, as in the words “drown’d, walk’d, arriv’d,” for “drowned, walked, arrived,” which has very much disfigured the tongue, and turned a tenth part of our smoothest words into so many clusters of consonants. This is the more remarkable, because the want of vowels in our language has been the general complaint of our politest authors, who nevertheless are the men that have made these retrenchments, and consequently very much increased our former scarcity.

This reflection on the words that end in ED, I have heard in conversation from one of the greatest geniuses this age has produced.* I think we may add to the foregoing observation, the change which has happened in our language, by the abbreviation of several words that are terminated in “eth,” by substituting an *s* in the room of the last syllable, as *ja* “drowns, walks, arrives,” and innumerable other words, which in the pronunciation of our forefathers were “drowneth, walketh, arriveth.” This has wonderfully multiplied a letter which was before too frequent in the English tongue, and added to that

* This was probably Dean Swift, who has made the same observation in his proposal for correcting, improving, and ascertaining the English tongue, &c. See Swift’s Works.

hissing in our language, which is taken so much notice of by foreigners; but at the same time humors our taciturnity, and eases us of many superfluous syllables.

I might here observe, that the same single letter on many occasions does the office of a whole word, and represents the "his" and "her" of our forefathers. There is no doubt but the ear of a foreigner, which is the best judge in this case, would very much disapprove of such innovations, which indeed we do ourselves in some measure, by retaining the old termination in writing, and in all the solemn offices of our religion.

As in the instances I have given we have epitomized many of our particular words to the detriment of our tongue, so on other occasions we have drawn two words into one, which has likewise very much untuned our language, and clogged it with consonants, as "mayn't, can't, shan't, won't," and the like, for "may not, can not, shall not, will not," &c.

It is, perhaps, this humor of speaking no more than we needs must, which has so miserably curtailed some of our words, that in familiar writings and conversations they often lose all but their first syllables, as in "mob. rep. pos. incog.," and the like; and as all ridiculous words make their first entry into a language by familiar phrases, I dare not answer for these, that they will not in time be looked upon as a part of our tongue. We see some of our poets have been so indiscreet as to imitate Hudibras's doggerel expressions in their serious compositions, by throw-

ing out the signs of our substantives which are essential to the English language. Nay, this humor of shortening our language had once run so far, that some of our celebrated authors, among whom we may reckon Sir Roger L'Estrange in particular, began to prune their words of all superfluous letters, as they termed them, in order to adjust the spelling to the pronunciation; which would have confounded all our ^{derivations} etymologies, and have quite destroyed our tongue.

We may here likewise observe that our proper names, when familiarized in English, generally dwindle to monosyllables, whereas in other modern languages they receive a softer turn on this occasion, by the addition of a new syllable. Nick, in Italian, is *Nicolini*; Jack, in French, *Janot*; and so of the rest.

There is another particular in our language which is a great instance of our frugality of words, and that is the suppressing of several particles which must be produced in other tongues to make a sentence intelligible. This often perplexes the best writers, when they find the relatives "whom, which," or "they," at their mercy, whether they may have admission or not; and will never be decided till we have something like an academy, that by the best authorities and rules drawn from the analogy of languages shall settle all controversies between grammar and idiom. ^{mode of speech}

I have only considered our language as it shows the genius and natural temper of the English, which

is modest, thoughtful, and sincere, and which, perhaps, may recommend the people, though it has spoiled the tongue. We might, perhaps, carry the same thought into other languages, and deduce a great part of what is peculiar to them from the genius of the people who speak them. It is certain, the light talkative humor of the French has not a little infected their tongue, which might be shown by many instances; as the genius of the Italians, which is so much addicted to music and ceremony, has moulded all their words and phrases to those particular uses. The stateliness and gravity of the Spaniards shows itself to perfection in the solemnity of their language; and the blunt honest humor of the Germans sounds better in the roughness of the High-Dutch than it would in a politer tongue.

C



VISION OF MIRZA.

Omnem, quæ nunc obducta tuenti

Mortales hebetat visus tibi, et humida circum

Caligat, nubem eripiam.

VIRG. ÆN. ii. 604.

The cloud, which, intercepting the clear light,
Hangs o'er thy eyes, and blunts thy mortal sight,
I will remove.

WHEN I was at Grand Cairo, I picked up several oriental manuscripts, which I have still by me. Among others I met with one entitled, *The Visions of Mirza*,

which I have read over with great pleasure. I intend to give it to the public when I have no other entertainment for them; and shall begin with the first vision, which I have translated word for word as follows:

“On the fifth day of the moon, which, according to the custom of my forefathers, I always keep holy, after having washed myself, and offered up my morning devotions, I ascended the high hills of Bagdad, in order to pass the rest of the day in meditation and prayer. As I was here airing myself on the tops of the mountains, I fell into a profound contemplation on the vanity of human life; and passing from one thought to another, ‘Surely,’ said I, ‘man is but a shadow, and life a dream.’ Whilst I was thus musing, I cast my eyes toward the summit of a rock that was not far from me, where I discovered one in the habit of a shepherd, with a musical instrument in his hand. As I looked upon him he applied it to his lips, and began to play upon it. The sound of it was exceeding sweet, and wrought into a variety of tunes that were inexpressibly melodious, and altogether different from anything I had ever heard. They put me in mind of those heavenly airs that are played to the departed souls of good men upon their first arrival in Paradise, to wear out the impressions of their last agonies, and qualify them for the pleasures of that happy place. My heart melted away in secret raptures.

“I had been often told that the rock before me was the haunt of a Genius; and that several had

been entertained with music who had passed by it, but never heard that the musician had before made himself visible. When he had raised my thoughts by those transporting airs which he played, to taste the pleasures of his conversation, as I looked upon him like one astonished, he beckoned to me, and by the waving of his hand directed me to approach the place where he sat. I drew near with that reverence which is due to a superior nature; and as my heart was entirely subdued by the captivating strains I had heard, I fell down at his feet and wept. The genius smiled upon me with a look of compassion and affability that familiarized him to my imagination, and at once dispelled all the fears and apprehensions with which I approached him. He lifted me from the ground, and taking me by the hand, 'Mirza,' said he, 'I have heard thee in thy soliloquies; follow me.'

"He then led me to the highest pinnacle of the rock, and placing me on the top of it, 'Cast thy eyes eastward,' said he, 'and tell me what thou seest.' 'I see,' said I, 'a huge valley, and a prodigious tide of water rolling through it.' 'The valley that thou seest,' said he, 'is the Vale of Misery, and the tide of water that thou seest, is part of the great tide of eternity.' 'What is the reason,' said I, 'that the tide I see rises out of a thick mist at one end, and again loses itself in a thick mist at the other?' 'What thou seest,' said he, 'is that portion of eternity which is called time, measured out by the sun, and reaching from the beginning of the

world to its consummation. Examine now,' said he, 'this sea that is bounded with darkness at both ends, and tell me what thou discoverest in it.' 'I see a bridge,' said I, 'standing in the midst of the tide.' 'The bridge thou seest,' said he, 'is human life; consider it attentively.' Upon a more leisurely survey of it, I found that it consisted of threescore and ten entire arches, with several broken arches, which, added to those that were entire, made up the number about a hundred. As I was counting the arches, the genius told me that this bridge consisted at first of a thousand arches; but that a great flood swept away the rest, and left the bridge in the ruinous condition I now beheld it. 'But tell me further,' said he, 'what thou discoverest on it.' 'I see multitudes of people passing over it,' said I, 'and a black cloud hanging on each end of it.' As I looked more attentively, I saw several of the passengers dropping through the bridge into the great tide that flowed underneath it; and upon further examination perceived there were innumerable trap-doors that lay concealed in the bridge, which the passengers no sooner trod upon, but they fell through them into the tide, and immediately disappeared. These hidden pitfalls were set very thick at the entrance of the bridge, so that throngs of people no sooner broke through the cloud, but many of them fell into them. They grew thinner towards the middle, but multiplied and lay closer together towards the end of the arches that were entire.

"There were indeed some persons, but their num-

ber was very small, that continued a kind of hobbling march on the broken arches, but fell through one after another, being quite tired and spent with so long a walk.

“I passed some time in the contemplation of this wonderful structure, and the great variety of objects which it presented. My heart was filled with a deep melancholy to see several dropping unexpectedly in the midst of mirth and jollity, and catching at everything that stood by them to save themselves. Some were looking up towards the heavens in a thoughtful posture, and in the midst of a speculation stumbled and fell out of sight. Multitudes were very busy in the pursuit of bubbles that glittered in their eyes and danced before them; but often when they thought themselves within the reach of them, their footing failed and down they sunk. In this confusion of objects, I observed some with scymitars in their hands, and others with urinals, who ran to and fro from the bridge, thrusting several persons on trap-doors which did not seem to lie in their way, and which they might have escaped had they not been thus forced upon them.

“The genius seeing me indulge myself on this melancholy prospect, told me I had dwelt long enough upon it. ‘Take thine eyes off the bridge,’ said he, ‘and tell me if thou yet seest anything thou dost not comprehend.’ Upon looking up, ‘What mean,’ said I, ‘those great flights of birds that are perpetually hovering about the bridge, and settling upon it from time to time? I see vultures, harpies, ravens,

cormorants, and among many other feathered creatures several little winged boys, that perch in great numbers upon the middle arches.' 'These,' said the genius, 'are Envy, Avarice, Superstition, Despair, Love, with the like cares and passions that infest human life.'

"I here fetched a deep sigh. 'Alas,' said I, 'man was made in vain! how is he given away to misery and mortality! tortured in life, and swallowed up in death!' The genius being moved with compassion towards me, bid me quit so uncomfortable a prospect. 'Look no more,' said he, 'on man in the first stage of his existence, in his setting out for Eternity; but cast thine eye on that thick mist into which the tide bears the several generations of mortals that fall into it.' I directed my sight as I was ordered, and, whether or no the good genius strengthened it with any supernatural force, or dissipated part of the mist that was before too thick for the eye to penetrate, I saw the valley opening at the further end, and spreading forth into an immense ocean, that had a huge rock of adamant running through the midst of it, and dividing it into two equal parts. The clouds still rested on one half of it, insomuch that I could discover nothing in it; but the other appeared to me a vast ocean planted with innumerable islands, that were covered with fruits and flowers, and interwoven with a thousand little shining seas that ran among them. I could see persons dressed in glorious habits with garlands upon their heads, passing among the trees, lying down by the sides of fountains, or resting on

beds of flowers; and could hear a confused harmony of singing-birds, falling waters, human voices, and musical instruments. Gladness grew in me upon the discovery of so delightful a scene. I wished for the wings of an eagle, that I might fly away to those happy seats; but the genius told me there was no passage to them, except through the gates of death that I saw opening every moment upon the bridge. 'The islands,' said he, 'that lie so fresh and green before thee, and with which the whole face of the ocean appears spotted as far as thou canst see, are more in number than the sands on the sea-shore; there are myriads of islands behind those which thou here discoverest, reaching further than thine eye, or even thine imagination can extend itself. These are the mansions of good men after death, who according to the degree and kinds of virtue in which they excelled, are distributed among those several islands, which abound with pleasures of different kinds and degrees, suitable to the relishes and perfections of those who are settled in them; every island is a paradise accommodated to its respective inhabitants. Are not these, O Mirza, habitations worth contending for? Does life appear miserable, that gives thee opportunities of earning such a reward? Is death to be feared, that will convey thee to so happy an existence? Think not man was made in vain, who has such an eternity reserved for him.' I gazed with inexpressible pleasure on these happy islands. At length I said, 'Show me now, I beseech thee, the secrets that lie hid under those dark clouds which

cover the ocean on the other side of the rock of adamant.' The genius making me no answer, I turned me about to address myself to him a second time, but I found that he had left me; I then turned again to the vision which I had been so long contemplating; but instead of the rolling tide, the arched bridge, and the happy islands, I saw nothing but the long hollow valley of Bagdad, with oxen, sheep, and camels grazing upon the sides of it."

C



GREAT GENIUS.

*Cui mens divinior, atque os
Magna sonaturum, des nominis hujus honorem.*

HOR. SAT. i. 4, 43.

On him confer the poet's sacred name,
Whose lofty voice declares the heavenly flame.

THERE is no character more frequently given to a writer than that of being a genius. I have heard many a little sonneteer called a fine genius. There is not an heroic scribbler in the nation that has not his admirers who think him a great genius; and as for your smatterers in tragedy, there is scarce a man among them who is not cried up by one or other for a prodigious genius.

My design in this paper is to consider what is properly a great genius, and to throw some thoughts together on so uncommon a subject.

Among great geniuses those few draw the admiration of all the world upon them, and stand up as the prodigies of mankind, who by the mere strength of natural parts, and without any assistance of art or learning, have produced works that were the delight of their own times, and the wonder of posterity. There appears something nobly wild and extravagant in these great natural geniuses that is infinitely more beautiful than all turn and polishing of what the French call a *bel esprit*, by which they would express a genius refined by conversation, reflection, and the reading of the most polite authors. The greatest genius which runs through the arts and sciences takes a kind of tincture from them, and falls unavoidably into imitation.

Many of these great natural geniuses that were never disciplined and broken by rules of art, are to be found among the ancients, and in particular among those of the more eastern parts of the world. Homer has innumerable flights that Virgil was not able to reach, and in the Old Testament we find several passages more elevated and sublime than any in Homer. At the same time that we allow a greater and more daring genius to the ancients, we must own that the greatest of them very much failed in, or, if you will, that they were much above the nicety and correctness of the moderns. In their similitudes and allusions, provided there was a likeness, they did not much trouble themselves about the decency of the comparison: thus Solomon resembles the nose of his beloved to the tower of

Lebanon which looketh towards Damascus; as the coming of a thief in the night, is a similitude of the same kind in the New Testament. It would be endless to make collections of this nature; Homer illustrates one of his heroes encompassed with the enemy, by an ass in a field of corn that has his sides belabored by all the boys of the village without stirring a foot for it; and another of them tossing to and fro in his bed and burning with resentment, to a piece of flesh broiled on the coals. This particular failure in the ancients opens a large field of raillery to the little wits, who can laugh at an indecency, but not relish the sublime in these sorts of writings. The present emperor of Persia, conformable to this eastern way of thinking, amidst a great many pompous titles, denominates himself "the sun of glory," and "the nutmeg of delight." In short, to cut off all cavilling against the ancients, and particularly those of the warmer climates, who had most heat and life in their imaginations, we are to consider that the rule of observing what the French call the *bienséance* in an allusion, has been found out of later years, and in the colder regions of the world; where we could make some amends for our want of force and spirit, by a scrupulous nicety and exactness in our compositions. Our countryman Shakspeare was a remarkable instance of this first kind of great geniuses.

I cannot quit this head without observing that Pindar was a great genius of the first class, who was hurried on by a natural fire and impetuosity to

vast conceptions of things and noble sallies of imagination. At the same time, can anything be more ridiculous than for men of a sober and moderate fancy to imitate this poet's way of writing in those monstrous compositions which go among us under the name of Pindarics? When I see people copying works, which, as Horace has represented them, are singular in their kind, and inimitable; when I see men following irregularities by rule, and by the little tricks of art straining after the most unbounded flights of nature, I cannot but apply to them that passage in Terence:

*Incerta hæc si tu postules
Ratione certa facere, nihilo plus agas,
Quam si des operam, ut cum ratione insanias.*

EUN. Act 1. Sc. 1. l. 16.

You may as well pretend to be mad and in your senses at the same time, as to think of reducing these uncertain things to any certainty by reason.

In short, a modern Pindaric writer compared with Pindar, is like a sister among the Camisards* compared with Virgil's Sibyl: there is the distortion,

* More commonly known by the name of the French Prophets, a set of enthusiasts originally of the Cevennes in France, who came into England about the year 1707, and had at first a considerable number of votaries. A fuller account of the rise and progress of this strange sect may be gained from two pamphlets, one in French entitled "Le Théâtre sacré de Cevennes, ou Récit de diverses Merveilles nouvellement opérées dans cette Partie de la Province de Languedoc. Lond. 1707, 12mo." The other in English, viz. "A Brand plucked from the Burning; exemplify'd in the unparalleled Case of Samuel Keimer, &c. London, 1718. 12mo."

grimace, and outward figure, but nothing of that divine impulse which raises the mind above itself, and makes the sounds more than human.

There is another kind of great geniuses which I shall place in a second class, not as I think them inferior to the first, but only for distinction's sake, as they are of a different kind. This second class of great geniuses are those who have formed themselves by rules, and submitted the greatness of their natural talents to the corrections and restraints of art. Such among the Greeks were Plato and Aristotle; among the Romans, ^{Latin} Virgil and Tully; among the English, Milton and Sir Francis Bacon.

The genius in both these classes of authors may be equally great, but shows itself after a different manner. In the first it is like a rich soil in a happy climate, that produces a whole wilderness of noble plants rising in a thousand beautiful landscapes without any certain order or regularity. In the other it is the same rich soil under the same happy climate, that has been laid out in walks and parterres, and cut into shape and beauty by the skill of the gardener.

The great danger in these latter kind of geniuses is, lest they cramp their own abilities too much by imitation, and form themselves altogether upon models, without giving the full play to their own natural parts. An imitation of the best authors is not to compare with a good original; and I believe we may observe that very few writers make an extraordinary figure in the world who have not some-

thing in their way of thinking or expressing themselves, that is peculiar to them, and entirely their own.

It is odd to consider what great geniuses are sometimes thrown away upon trifles.

“I once saw a shepherd,” says a famous Italian author, “who used to divert himself in his solitudes with tossing up eggs and catching them again without breaking them: in which he had arrived to so great a degree of perfection that he would keep up four at a time for several minutes together playing in the air, and falling into his hands by turns. I think,” says the author, “I never saw a greater severity than in this man’s face; for by his wonderful perseverance and application he had contracted the seriousness and gravity of a privy-counsellor; and I could not but reflect with myself that the same assiduity and attention, had they been rightly applied, ‘might’* have made him a greater mathematician than Archimedes.”

C

* “Would.” Spect. in folio.

GOOD-NATURE.

*Sic vita erat : facile omnes perferre ac pati :
 Cum quibus erat cunque una, his sese dedere,
 Eorum obsequi studiis : adversus nemini ;
 Nunquam præponens se aliis. Ita facillime
 Sine invidia invenias laudem.* — TER. ANDR. Act 1. Sc. 1.

His manner of life was this : to bear with everybody's humors ; to comply with the inclinations and pursuits of those he conversed with ; to contradict nobody ; never to assume a superiority over others. This is the ready way to gain applause, without exciting envy.

MAN is subject to innumerable pains and sorrows by the very condition of humanity, and yet, as if nature had not sown evils enough in life, we are continually adding grief to grief, and aggravating the common calamity by our cruel treatment of one another. Every man's natural weight of affliction is still made more heavy by the envy, malice, treachery, or injustice of his neighbor. At the same time that the storm beats on the whole species, we are falling foul upon one another. /

Half the misery of human life might be extinguished, would men alleviate the general curse they lie under, by mutual offices of compassion, benevolence, and humanity. There is nothing therefore which we ought more to encourage in ourselves and others, than that disposition of mind which in our

language goes under the title of good-nature, and which I shall choose for the subject of this day's speculation.

Good-nature is more agreeable in conversation than wit, and gives a certain air to the countenance which is more amiable than beauty. It shows virtue in the fairest light, takes off in some measure from the deformity of vice, and makes even folly and impertinence supportable.

There is no society or conversation to be kept up in the world without good-nature, or something which must bear its appearance, and supply its place. For this reason mankind have been forced to invent a kind of artificial humanity, which is what we express by the word good-breeding. For if we examine thoroughly the idea of what we call so, we shall find it to be nothing else but an imitation and mimicry of good-nature, or, in other terms, affability, complaisance, and easiness of temper reduced into an art.

These exterior shows and appearances of humanity render a man wonderfully popular and beloved, when they are founded upon a real good-nature; but without it are like hypocrisy in religion, or a bare form of holiness, which, when it is discovered, makes a man more detestable than professed impiety.

Good-nature is generally born with us: health, prosperity, and kind treatment from the world are great cherishers of it where they find it; but nothing is capable of forcing it up, where it does not grow of itself. It is one of the blessings of a happy constitution, which education may improve but not produce.

Xenophon, in the life of his imaginary prince, whom he describes as a pattern for real ones, is always celebrating the philanthropy or good-nature of his hero, which he tells us he brought into the world with him, and gives many remarkable instances of it in his childhood, as well as in all the several parts of his life.* Nay, on his death-bed, he describes him as being pleased, that while his soul returned to him who made it, his body should incorporate with the great mother of all things, and by that means become beneficial to mankind. For which reason, he gives his sons a positive order not to enshrine it in gold or silver, but to lay it in the earth as soon as the life was gone out of it.

- An instance of such an overflowing of humanity, such an exuberant love to mankind, could not have entered into the imagination of a writer, who had not a soul filled with great ideas, and a general benevolence to mankind.

In that celebrated passage of Sallust, where Cæsar and Cato are placed in such beautiful but opposite lights,† Cæsar's character is chiefly made up of good-nature, as it showed itself in all its forms towards his friends or his enemies, his servants or dependants, the guilty or the distressed. As for Cato's character, it is rather awful than amiable. Justice seems most agreeable to the nature of God, and mercy to that of man. A Being who has nothing

* Xenoph. De Cyri Instit. lib. viii. cap. vii. sect. 3. edit. J. A. Ern. 8vo, tom. i. p. 550.

† Sallust. Bell. Catil. c. liv.

to pardon in himself, may reward every man according to his works; but he whose very best actions must be seen with grains of allowance, cannot be too mild, moderate, and forgiving. For this reason, among all the monstrous characters in human nature, there is none so odious, nor indeed so exquisitely ridiculous, as that of a rigid severe temper in a worthless man.

This part of good-nature however, which consists in the pardoning and overlooking of faults, is to be exercised only in doing ourselves justice, and that too in the ordinary commerce and occurrences of life; for in the public administrations of justice, mercy to one may be cruelty to others.

It is grown almost into a maxim, that good-natured men are not always men of the most wit. This observation, in my opinion, has no foundation in nature. The greatest wits I have conversed with are men eminent for their humanity. I take therefore this remark to have been occasioned by two reasons. First, because ill-nature among ordinary observers passes for wit. A spiteful saying gratifies so many little passions in those who hear it, that it generally meets with a good reception. The laugh rises upon it, and the man who utters it is looked upon as a shrewd satirist. This may be one reason why a great many pleasant companions appear so surprisingly dull when they have endeavored to be merry in print, the public being more just than private clubs or assemblies, in distinguishing between what is wit and what is ill-nature.

Another reason why the good-natured man may sometimes bring his wit in question, is, perhaps, because he is apt to be moved with compassion for those misfortunes or infirmities which another would turn into ridicule, and by that means gain the reputation of a wit. The ill-natured man, though but of equal parts, gives himself a larger field to expatiate in; he exposes those failings in human nature which the other would cast a veil over, laughs at vices which the other either excuses or conceals, gives utterance to reflections which the other stifles, falls indifferently upon friends or enemies, exposes the person who has obliged him, and, in short, sticks at nothing that may establish his character as a wit. It is no wonder, therefore, he succeeds in it better than the man of humanity,* as a person who makes use of indirect methods is more likely to grow rich than the fair trader.

L

* If Dr. Swift's wit was to be subjected to this scrutiny, it would be circumscribed within a very narrow compass. The chief source from which it sprung was the indignation that gnawed his heart.

EXERCISE AND TEMPERANCE.

Νήπιοι, οὐδ' ἴσασιν ὄσω πλέον ἤμισυ παντός.

Οὐδ' ὄσον ἐν μαλάχῃ τε δὲ ἀσφοδέλω μέγ' ὄνειρα.

HESIOD, OPER. ET DIER. i. 40.

Fools not to know that half exceeds the whole,
How blest the sparing meal and temperate bowl.

THERE is a story in the Arabian Nights Tales of a king who had long languished under an ill habit of body, and had taken abundance of remedies to no purpose. At length, says the fable, a physician cured him by the following method: He took a hollow ball of wood, and filled it with several drugs; after which he closed it up so artificially that nothing appeared. He likewise took a mallet, and after having hollowed the handle, and that part which strikes the ball, he inclosed in them several drugs after the same manner as in the ball itself. He then ordered the sultan, who was his patient, to exercise himself early in the morning with these rightly prepared instruments, till such time as he should sweat: when, as the story goes, the virtue of the medicaments perspiring through the wood had so good an influence on the sultan's constitution, that they cured him of an indisposition which all the compositions he had taken inwardly had not been able to remove. This

eastern allegory is finely contrived to show us how beneficial bodily labor is to health, and that exercise is the most effectual physic. I have described in my hundred and fifteenth paper, from the general structure and mechanism of a human body, how absolutely necessary exercise is for its preservation. I shall in this place recommend another great preservative of health, which in many cases produces the same effects as exercise, and may in some measure supply its place, where opportunities of exercise are wanting. The preservative I am speaking of is temperance, which has those particular advantages above all other means of health, that it may be practised by all ranks and conditions, at any season, or in any place. It is a kind of regimen into which every man may put himself, without interruption to business, expense of money, or loss of time. If exercise throws off all superfluities, temperance prevents them; if exercise clears the vessels, temperance neither satiates nor overstrains them; if exercise raises proper ferments in the humors, and promotes the circulation of the blood, temperance gives nature her full play, and enables her to exert herself in all her force and vigor; if exercise dissipates a growing distemper, temperance starves it.

Physic, for the most part, is nothing else but the substitute of exercise or temperance. Medicines are indeed absolutely necessary in acute distempers, that cannot wait the slow operations of these two great instruments of health; but did men live in an habitual course of exercise and temperance, there would

be but little occasion for them. Accordingly we find that those parts of the world are the most healthy where they subsist by the chase; and that men lived longest when their lives were employed in hunting, and when they had little food besides what they caught. Blistering, cupping, bleeding, are seldom of use but to the idle and intemperate; as all those inward applications which are so much in practice among us are for the most part nothing else but expedients to make luxury consistent with health. The apothecary is perpetually employed in countermining the cook and the vintner. It is said of Diogenes, that meeting a young man who was going to a feast, he took him up in the street and carried him home to his friends, as one who was running into imminent danger, had not he prevented him.* What would that philosopher have said, had he been present at the gluttony of a modern meal? Would not he have thought the master of a family mad, and have begged his servants to tie down his hands, had he seen him devour fowl, fish, and flesh; swallow oil and vinegar, wines and spices; throw down salads of twenty different herbs, sauces of a hundred ingredients, confections and fruits of numberless sweets and flavors? What unnatural motions and counterferments must such a medley of intemperance produce in the body? For my part, when I behold a fashionable table set out in all its magnificence, I fancy that I see gouts and dropsies, fevers and

* Diog. Laërt. Vitæ Philosoph. lib. vi. cap. 2, n. 6.

in fact
lethargies, with other innumerable distempers, lying in ambuscade among the dishes.

Nature delights in the most plain and simple diet. Every animal, but man, keeps to one dish. Herbs are the food of this species, fish of that, and flesh of a third. Man falls upon everything that comes in his way; not the smallest fruit or excrescence of the earth, scarce a berry or a mushroom, can escape him.

It is impossible to lay down any determinate rule for temperance, because what is luxury in one may be temperance in another; but there are few that have lived any time in the world, who are not judges of their own constitutions, so far as to know what kinds and what proportions of food do best agree with them. Were I to consider my readers as my patients, and to prescribe such a kind of temperance as is accommodated to all persons, and such as is particularly suitable to our climate and way of living, I would copy the following rules of a very eminent physician. "Make your whole repast out of one dish. If you indulge in a second, avoid drinking anything strong till you have finished your meal; at the same time abstain from all sauces, or, at least, such as are not the most plain and simple." A man could not well be guilty of gluttony if he stuck to these few ^{plain} obvious and easy rules. In the first case there would be no variety of tastes to solicit his palate, and occasion excess; nor in the second, any artificial ^{stimulants} provocatives to relieve satiety, and create a false appetite. Were I to prescribe a rule for

drinking, it should be formed upon a saying quoted by Sir William Temple: "The first glass for myself, the second for my friends, the third for good-humor, and the fourth for mine enemies." But because it is impossible for one who lives in the world to diet himself always in so philosophical a manner, I think every man should have his days of abstinence, according as his constitution will permit. These are great reliefs to nature, as they qualify her for struggling with hunger and thirst, whenever any distemper or duty of life may put her upon such difficulties; and at the same time give her an opportunity of extricating herself from her oppressions, and recovering the several tones and springs of her distended vessels. Besides that, abstinence well timed, often kills a sickness in embryo, and destroys the first seeds of an indisposition. It is observed by two or three ancient authors,* that Socrates, notwithstanding he lived in Athens during that great plague which has made so much noise through all ages, and has been celebrated at different times by such eminent hands; I say, notwithstanding that he lived in the time of this devouring pestilence, he never caught the least infection, which those writers unani- mously ascribe to that uninterrupted temperance which he always observed.

And here I cannot but mention an observation which I have often made, upon reading the lives of the philosophers, and comparing them with any series of kings or great men of the same number. If we

* Diogenes Laërtius in Vit. Socratis.—Elian in Var. Hist. lib. xiii. cap. 27, &c.

consider these ancient sages, a great part of whose philosophy consisted in a temperate and abstemious course of life, one would think the life of a philosopher and the life of a man were of two different dates. For we find that the generality of these wise men were nearer a hundred than sixty years of age, at the time of their respective deaths. But the most remarkable instance of the efficacy of temperance towards the procuring of long life, is what we meet with in a little book published by Lewis Cornaro the Venetian; which I the rather mention because it is of undoubted credit, as the late Venetian ambassador, who was of the same family, attested more than once in conversation, when he resided in England. Cornaro, who was the author of the little treatise I am mentioning, was of an infirm constitution till about forty, when by obstinately persisting in an exact course of temperance, he recovered a perfect state of health; insomuch that at fourscore he published his book, which has been translated into English under the title of "Sure and Certain Methods of attaining a Long and Healthy Life." He lived to give a third or fourth edition of it; and after having passed his hundredth year, died without pain or agony, and like one who falls asleep. The treatise I mention has been taken notice of by several eminent authors, and is written with such a spirit of cheerfulness, religion, and good sense, as are the natural concomitants of temperance and sobriety. The mixture of the old man in it is rather a recommendation than a discredit to it.

Having designed this paper as the sequel to that upon Exercise, I have not here considered temperance as it is a moral virtue, which I shall make the subject for a future speculation, but only as it is the means of health.

L



DISCRETION.

Nullum numen abest, si sit prudentia.

JUV. SAT. X. 365.

Prudence supplies the want of every good.

I HAVE often thought if the minds of men were laid open, we should see but little difference between that of the wise man and that of the fool. There are infinite reveries, numberless extravagances, and a perpetual train of vanities which pass through both. The great difference is, that the first knows how to pick and cull his thoughts for conversation, by suppressing some, and communicating others; whereas the other lets them all indifferently fly out in words. This sort of discretion, however, has no place in private conversation between intimate friends. On such occasions the wisest men very often talk like the weakest; for indeed the talking with a friend is nothing else but thinking aloud.

Tully has therefore very justly exposed a precept delivered by some ancient writers, that a man should live with his enemy in such a manner as might leave him room to become his friend; and with his friend

in such a manner, that if he became his enemy, it should not be in his power to hurt him. The first part of this rule, which regards our behavior towards an enemy, is indeed very reasonable, as well as very prudential; but the latter part of it, which regards our behavior towards a friend, savors more of cunning than of discretion, and would cut a man off from the greatest pleasures of life, which are the freedoms of conversation with a bosom-friend. Besides that, when a friend is turned into an enemy, and as the son of Sirach calls him,* “a bewrayer of secrets,” the world is just enough to accuse the perfidiousness of the friend, rather than the indiscretion of the person who confided in him.

Discretion does not only show itself in words, but in all the circumstances of action, and is like an under-agent of Providence, to guide and direct us in the ordinary concerns of life.

There are many more shining qualities in the mind of man, but there is none so useful as discretion; it is this indeed which gives a value to all the rest, which sets them at work in their proper times and places, and turns them to the advantage of the person who is possessed of them. Without it, learning is pedantry, and wit impertinence; virtue itself looks like weakness; the best parts only qualify a man to be more sprightly in errors, and active to his own prejudice.

Nor does discretion only make a man the master of his own parts, but of other men's. The discreet man finds out the talents of those he converses with,

* Eccles. vi 9 ; xxvii. 17.

and knows how to apply them to proper uses. Accordingly, if we look into particular communities and divisions of men, we may observe that it is the discreet man, not the witty, nor the learned, nor the brave, who guides the conversation, and gives measures to the society. A man with great talents, but void of discretion, is like Polyphemus in the fable, strong and blind, endued with an irresistible force, which for want of sight is of no use to him.

Though a man has all other ^{perfections}, and wants discretion, he will be of no great consequence in the world; but if he has this single talent in perfection, and but a common share of others, he may do what he pleases in his particular station of life.

At the same time that I think discretion the most useful talent a man can be master of, I look upon cunning to be the accomplishment of little, mean, ungenerous minds. Discretion points out the noblest ends to us, and pursues the most proper and laudable methods of attaining them: cunning has only private selfish aims, and sticks at nothing which may make them succeed. Discretion has large and extended views, and like a well-formed eye, commands a whole horizon: cunning is a kind of shortsightedness, that discovers the minutest objects which are near at hand, but is not able to discern things at a distance. Discretion, the more it is discovered, gives a greater authority to the person who possesses it: cunning, when it is once detected, loses its force, and makes a man incapable of bringing about even those events which he might have done, had he passed only for a plain man. Discretion is

the perfection of reason, and a guide to us in all the duties of life: cunning is a kind of instinct, that only looks out after our immediate interest and welfare. Discretion is only found in men of strong sense and good understandings: cunning is often to be met with in brutes themselves, and in persons who are but the fewest removes from them. In short, cunning is only the mimic of discretion, and may pass upon weak men, in the same manner as vivacity is often mistaken for wit, and gravity for wisdom.

The cast of mind which is natural to a discreet man, makes him look forward into futurity, and consider what will be his condition millions of ages hence, as well as what it is at present. He knows that the misery or happiness which are reserved for him in another world, lose nothing of their reality by being placed at so great a distance from him. The objects do not appear little to him because they are remote. He considers that those pleasures and pains which lie hid in eternity, approach nearer to him every moment, and will be present with him in their full weight and measure, as much as those pains and pleasures which he feels at this very instant. For this reason he is careful to secure to himself that which is the proper happiness of his nature, and the ultimate design of his being. He carries his thoughts to the end of every action, and considers the most distant as well as the most immediate effects of it. He supersedes every little prospect of gain and advantage which offers itself here, if he does not find it consistent with his views of an hereafter. In a word, his hopes are full of immortality, his schemes

are large and glorious, and his conduct suitable to one who knows his true interest, and how to pursue it by proper methods.

I have, in this essay upon Discretion, considered it both as an accomplishment and as a virtue, and have therefore described it in its full extent; not only as it is conversant about worldly affairs, but as it regards our whole existence; not only as it is the guide of a mortal creature, but as it is in general the director of a reasonable being. It is in this light that discretion is represented by the wise man, who sometimes mentions it under the name of discretion, and sometimes under that of wisdom. It is indeed, as described in the latter part of this paper, the greatest wisdom, but at the same time in the power of every one to attain. Its advantages are infinite, but its acquisition easy; or, to speak of her in the words of the apocryphal writer whom I quoted in my last Saturday's paper: * "Wisdom is glorious and never fadeth away, yet she is easily seen of them that love her, and found of such as seek her. She preventeth them that desire her in making herself first known unto them. He that seeketh her early, shall have no great travel; for he shall find her sitting at his doors. To think therefore upon her is the perfection of wisdom, and whoso watcheth for her shall quickly be without care. For she goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her, showeth herself favorably unto them in the ways, and meeteth them in every thought."

C

* Wisdom of Solomon, chap. vi. 12-16.

SIR ROGER IN TOWN, GIVES TO THE "SPECTATOR" THE NEWS FROM THE COUNTRY.

Evo rarissima nostro
Simplicitas. OVID. ARS AM. i. 241.

Most rare is now our old simplicity. DRYDEN.

I WAS this morning surprised with a great knocking at the door, when my landlady's daughter came up to me and told me that there was a man below who desired to speak with me. Upon my asking her who it was, she told me it was a very grave, elderly person, but that she did not know his name. I immediately went down to him, and found him to be the coachman of my worthy friend Sir Roger de Coverley. He told me that his master came to town last night, and would be glad to take a turn with me in Gray's Inn Walks. As I was wondering with myself what had brought Sir Roger to town, not having lately received any letter from him, he told me that his master was come up to get a sight of Prince Eugene, and that he desired I would immediately meet him.

I was not a little pleased with the curiosity of the old knight, though I did not much wonder at it, having heard him say more than once in private discourse, that he looked upon Prince Eugenio — for

so the knight always calls him — to be a greater man than Scanderbeg.

I was no sooner come into Gray's Inn Walks, but I heard my friend upon the terrace hemming twice or thrice to himself with great vigor, for he loves to clear his pipes in good air, to make use of his own phrase, and is not a little pleased with any one who takes notice of the strength which he still exerts in his morning hems.

I was touched with a secret joy at the sight of the good old man, who before he saw me was engaged in conversation with a beggar-man that had asked an alms of him. I could hear my friend chide him for not finding out some work; but at the same time saw him put his hand in his pocket and give him sixpence.

Our salutations were very hearty on both sides, consisting of many kind shakes of the hand, and several affectionate looks which we cast upon one another. After which the knight told me my good friend his chaplain was very well, and much at my service, and that the Sunday before he had made a most incomparable sermon out of Dr. Barrow. "I have left," says he, "all my affairs in his hands, and being willing to lay an obligation upon him, have deposited with him thirty marks, to be distributed among his poor parishioners."

He then proceeded to acquaint me with the welfare of Will Wimble. Upon which he put his hand into his fob and presented me in his name with a tobacco-stopper, telling me that Will had been busy

all the beginning of the winter in turning great quantities of them; and that he made a present of one to every gentleman in the county who has good principles, and smokes. He added, that poor Will was at present under great tribulation, for that Tom Touchy had taken the law of him for cutting some hazel-sticks out of one of his hedges.

Among other pieces of news which the knight brought from his country seat, he informed me that Moll White was dead, and that about a month after her death the wind was so very high, that it blew down the end of one of his barns. "But for my own part," says Sir Roger, "I do not think that the old woman had any hand in it."

He afterwards fell into an account of the diversions which had passed in his house during the holidays; for Sir Roger, after the laudable custom of his ancestors, always keeps open house at Christmas. I learned from him that he had killed eight fat hogs for this season, that he had dealt about his chines very liberally amongst his neighbors, and that in particular he had sent a string of hogs-puddings with a pack of cards to every poor family in the parish. "I have often thought," says Sir Roger, "it happens very well that Christmas should fall out in the middle of winter. It is the most dead uncomfortable time of the year, when the poor people would suffer very much from their poverty and cold, if they had not good cheer, warm fires, and Christmas gambols to support them. I love to rejoice their poor hearts at this season, and to see the

whole village merry in my great hall. I allow a double quantity of malt to my small-beer, and set it a running for twelve days to every one that calls for it. I have always a piece of cold beef and a mince-pie upon the table, and am wonderfully pleased to see my tenants pass away a whole evening in playing their innocent tricks, and smutting one another. Our friend Will Wimble is as merry as any of them, and shows a thousand roguish tricks upon these occasions."

I was very much delighted with the reflection of my old friend, which carried so much goodness in it. He then launched out into the praise of the late act of parliament for securing the Church of England,* and told me, with great satisfaction, that he believed it already began to take effect, for that a rigid dissenter, who chanced to dine at his house on Christmas-day, had been observed to eat very plentifully of his plum-porridge.

After having dispatched all our country matters, Sir Roger made several inquiries concerning the club, and particularly of his old antagonist Sir Andrew Freeport. He asked me, with a kind of smile, whether Sir Andrew had not taken advantage of his absence, to vent among them some of his republican doctrines; but soon after, gathering up his countenance into a more than ordinary seriousness, "Tell me truly," says he, "don't you think Sir Andrew had a hand in the pope's procession?" But without giving me time to answer him, "Well, well," says

* Stat. 10 Ann. cap. 2. The act against occasional conformity.

he, "I know you are a wary man, and do not care to talk of public matters."

The knight then asked me if I had seen Prince Eugenio, and made me promise to get him a stand in some convenient place where he might have a full sight of that extraordinary man, whose presence does so much honor to the British nation. He dwelt very long on the praises of this great general, and I found that since I was with him in the country, he had drawn many observations together out of his reading in Baker's Chronicle, and other authors, who always lie in his hall-window, which very much redound to the honor of this prince.

Having passed away the greatest part of the morning in hearing the knight's reflections, which were partly private and partly political, he asked me if I would smoke a pipe with him over a dish of coffee at Squires'. As I love the old man, I take a delight in complying with everything that is agreeable to him, and accordingly waited on him to the coffee-house, where his venerable figure drew upon us the eyes of the whole room. He had no sooner seated himself at the upper end of the high table, but he called for a clean pipe, a paper of tobacco, a dish of coffee, a wax candle, and the "Supplement,"* with such an air of cheerfulness and good-humor, that all the boys in the coffee-room, who seemed to take pleasure in serving him, were at once employed on his several errands, insomuch that nobody else could come at a dish of tea till the knight had got all his conveniences about him.

L

* A periodical paper.

SIR ROGER AT A PLAY WITH THE
"SPECTATOR."

*Respicere exemplar vitæ morumque jubebe
Doctum imitatore, et veras hinc ducere voces.*

HOR. ARS POET. 317.

Keep Nature's great original in view,
And thence the living images pursue. FRANCIS.

MY friend Sir Roger de Coverley, when we last met together at the club, told me that he had a great mind to see the new tragedy * with me, assuring me at the same time that he had not been at a play these twenty years. "The last I saw," said Sir Roger, "was The Committee, which I should not have gone to neither, had not I been told beforehand that it was a good Church-of-England comedy." He then proceeded to inquire of me who this distressed mother was; and upon hearing that she was Hector's widow, he told me that her husband was a brave man, and that when he was a schoolboy he had read his life at the end of the dictionary. My friend asked me, in the next place, if there would not be some danger in coming home late, in case the Mohocks should be abroad. "I assure you," says he, "I thought I had fallen into their hands last night; for I observed two or three lusty black men that followed me half-way up Fleet Street, and mended their

* The Distressed Mother.

pace behind me, in proportion as I put on to get away from them. You must know," continued the knight, with a smile, "I fancied they had a mind to hunt me; for I remember an honest gentleman in my neighborhood, who was served such a trick in King Charles the Second's time, for which reason he has not ventured himself in town ever since. I might have shown them very good sport, had this been their design; for, as I am an old fox-hunter, I should have turned and dodged, and have played them a thousand tricks they had never seen in their lives before." Sir Roger added, that "if these gentlemen had any such intention, they did not succeed very well in it; for I threw them out," says he, "at the end of Norfolk Street, where I doubled the corner, and got shelter in my lodgings before they could imagine what was become of me. However," says the knight, "if Captain Sentry will make one of us to-morrow night, and if you will both of you call upon me about four o'clock, that we may be at the house before it is full, I will have my own coach in readiness to attend you, for John tells me he has got the forewheels mended."

The captain, who did not fail to meet me there at the appointed hour, bade Sir Roger fear nothing, for that he had put on the same sword which he made use of at the battle of Steenkirk.* Sir Roger's ser-

* In 1692. Gentlemen wore about this time a kind of neckcloth called a Steenkirk, probably from its being taken notice of first at this battle. In like manner, and for a similar reason, a wig was called a Ramillies, being introduced, or having become fashionable, about the time of that battle, in 1706.

vants, and among the rest my old friend the butler, had, I found, provided themselves with good oaken planks, to attend their master upon this occasion. When we had placed him in his coach, with myself at his left hand, the captain before him, and his butler at the head of his footmen in the rear, we conveyed him in safety to the play-house, where, after having marched up the entry in good order, the captain and I went in with him, and seated him betwixt us in the pit. As soon as the house was full and the candles lighted, my old friend stood up, and looked about him with that pleasure which a mind seasoned with humanity naturally feels in itself, at the sight of a multitude of people who seem pleased with one another, and partake of the same common entertainment. I could not but fancy to myself, as the old man stood up in the middle of the pit, that he made a very proper centre to a tragic audience. Upon the entering of Pyrrhus, the knight told me that he did not believe the king of France himself had a better strut. I was indeed very attentive to my old friend's remarks, because I looked upon them as a piece of natural criticism, and was well pleased to hear him, at the conclusion of almost every scene, telling me, that he could not imagine how the play would end. One while he appeared much concerned for Andromache: and a little while after as much for Hermione; and was extremely puzzled to think what would become of Pyrrhus.

When Sir Roger saw Andromache's obstinate refusal to her lover's importunities, he whispered me

in the ear, that he was sure she would never have him; to which he added, with a more than ordinary vehemence, "You can't imagine, sir, what it is to have to do with a widow." Upon Pyrrhus threatening afterwards to leave her, the knight shook his head and muttered to himself, "Ay, do if you can." This part dwelt so much upon my friend's imagination, that at the close of the third act, as I was thinking of something else, he whispered me in my ear, "These widows, sir, are the most perverse creatures in the world. But pray," says he, "you that are a critic, is this play according to your dramatic rules, as you call them? Should your people in tragedy always talk to be understood? Why, there is not a single sentence in this play that I do not know the meaning of."

The fourth act very luckily began before I had time to give the old gentleman an answer. "Well," says the knight, sitting down with great satisfaction, "I suppose we are now to see Hector's ghost." He then renewed his attention, and, from time to time, fell a-praising the widow. He made, indeed, a little mistake as to one of her pages, whom, at his first entering, he took for Astyanax; but he quickly set himself right in that particular, though, at the same time, he owned he should have been very glad to have seen the little boy, who, says he, must needs be a very fine child by the account that is given of him. Upon Hermione's going off with a menace to Pyrrhus, the audience gave a loud clap, to which Sir Roger added, "On my word, a notable young baggage!"

As there was a very remarkable silence and stillness in the audience during the whole action, it was natural for them to take the opportunity of these intervals between the acts to express their opinion of the players, and of their respective parts. Sir Roger, hearing a cluster of them praise Orestes, struck in with them, and told them that he thought his friend Pylades was a very sensible man. As they were afterwards applauding Pyrrhus, Sir Roger put in a second time. "And let me tell you," says he, "though he speaks but little, I like the old fellow in whiskers as well as any of them." Captain Sentry, seeing two or three wags who sat near us lean with an attentive ear towards Sir Roger, and fearing lest they should smoke the knight, plucked him by the elbow, and whispered something in his ear, that lasted till the opening of the fifth act. The knight was wonderfully attentive to the account which Orestes gives of Pyrrhus' death, and at the conclusion of it, told me it was such a bloody piece of work, that he was glad it was not done upon the stage. Seeing afterwards Orestes in his raving fit, he grew more than ordinarily serious, and took occasion to moralize, in his way, upon an evil conscience, adding, that Orestes, in his madness, looked as if he saw something.

As we were the first that came into the house, so we were the last that went out of it; being resolved to have a clear passage for our old friend, whom we did not care to venture among the justling of the crowd. Sir Roger went out fully satisfied with his

entertainment, and we guarded him to his lodging in the same manner that we brought him to the play-house; being highly pleased for my own part, not only with the performance of the excellent piece which had been presented, but with the satisfaction which it had given to the good old man.

L

CHEERFULNESS.

Quid pure tranquillet.

HOR. EPIST. i. 18. 102

What calms the breast, and makes the mind serene.

IN my last Saturday's paper I spoke of cheerfulness as it is a moral habit of the mind, and accordingly mentioned such moral motives as are apt to cherish and keep alive this happy temper in the soul of man. I shall now consider cheerfulness in its natural state, and reflect on those motives to it which are indifferent either as to virtue or vice.

Cheerfulness is, in the first place, the best promoter of health. Repinings, and secret murmurs of heart, give imperceptible strokes to those delicate fibres of which the vital parts are composed, and wear out the machine insensibly; not to mention those violent ferments which they stir up in the blood, and those irregular disturbed motions which they raise in the animal spirits. I scarce remember, in my own observation, to have met with any old men, or with such who, to use our English phrase,

wear well, that had not at least a certain indolence in their humor, if not a more than ordinary gayety and cheerfulness of heart. The truth of it is, health and cheerfulness mutually beget each other; with this difference, that we seldom meet with a great degree of health which is not attended with a certain cheerfulness, but very often see cheerfulness where there is no great degree of health.

Cheerfulness bears the same friendly regard to the mind as to the body. It banishes all anxious care and discontent, soothes and composes the passions, and keeps the soul in a perpetual calm. But having already touched on this last consideration, I shall here take notice, that the world in which we are placed is filled with innumerable objects that are proper to raise and keep alive this happy temper of mind.

If we consider the world in its subserviency to man, one would think it was made for our use; but if we consider it in its natural beauty and harmony, one would be apt to conclude it was made for our pleasure. The sun, which is as the great soul of the universe, and produces all the necessaries of life, has a particular influence in cheering the mind of man, and making the heart glad.

Those several living creatures which are made for our service or sustenance, at the same time either fill the woods with their music, furnish us with game, or raise pleasing ideas in us by the delightfulness of their appearance. Fountains, lakes, and rivers are as refreshing to the imagination as to the soil through which they pass.

There are writers of great distinction, who have made it an argument for Providence, that the whole earth is covered with green, rather than with any other color, as being such a right mixture of light and shade, that it comforts and strengthens the eye, instead of weakening or grieving it. For this reason, several painters have a green cloth hanging near them, to ease the eye upon, after too great an application to their coloring. A famous modern philosopher* accounts for it in the following manner. All colors that are more luminous, overpower and dissipate the animal spirits which are employed in sight; on the contrary, those that are more obscure do not give the animal spirits a sufficient exercise; whereas the rays that produce in us the idea of green, fall upon the eye in such a due proportion, that they give animal spirits their proper play, and, by keeping up the struggles in a just balance, excite a very pleasing and agreeable sensation. Let the cause be what it will, the effect is certain; for which reason, the poets ascribe to this particular color the epithet of cheerful.

To consider further this double end in the works of nature, and how they are at the same time both useful and entertaining, we find that the most important parts in the vegetable world are those which are the most beautiful. These are the seeds by which the several races of plants are propagated and continued, and which are always lodged in flowers or blossoms. Nature seems to hide her principal de-

* Sir Isaac Newton.

sign, and to be industrious in making the earth gay and delightful, while she is carrying on her great work, and intent upon her own preservation. The husbandman, after the same manner, is employed in laying out the whole country into a kind of garden or landscape, and making everything smile about him, whilst in reality he thinks of nothing but of the harvest, and the increase which is to arise from it.

We may further observe how Providence has taken care to keep up this cheerfulness in the mind of man, by having formed it after such a manner as to make it capable of conceiving delight from several objects which seem to have very little use in them; as from the wildness of rocks and deserts, and the like grotesque parts of nature. Those who are versed in philosophy may still carry this consideration higher, by observing, that if matter had appeared to us endowed only with those real qualities which it actually possesses, it would have made but a very joyless and uncomfortable figure; and why has Providence given it a power of producing in us such imaginary qualities, as tastes and colors, sounds and smells, heat and cold, but that man, while he is conversant in the lower stations of nature, might have his mind cheered and delighted with agreeable sensations? In short, the whole universe is a kind of theatre, filled with objects that either raise in us pleasure, amusement, or admiration.

The reader's own thoughts will suggest to him the vicissitude of day and night, the change of seasons, with all that variety of scenes which diversify the

face of nature, and fill the mind with a perpetual succession of beautiful and pleasing images.

I shall not here mention the several entertainments of art, with the pleasures of friendship, books, conversation, and other accidental diversions of life, because I would only take notice of such incitements to a cheerful temper as offer themselves to persons of all ranks and conditions, and which may sufficiently show us that Providence did not design this world should be filled with murmurs and repinings, or that the heart of man should be involved in gloom and melancholy.

I the more inculcate this cheerfulness of temper as it is a virtue in which our countrymen are observed to be more deficient than any other nation. Melancholy is a kind of demon that haunts our island, and often conveys herself to us in an easterly wind. A celebrated French novelist, in opposition to those who begin their romance with the flowery season of the year, enters on his story thus: "In the gloomy month of November, when the people of England hang and drown themselves, a disconsolate lover walked out into the fields," &c.

Every one ought to fence against the temper of his climate or constitution, and frequently to indulge in himself those considerations which may give him a serenity of mind, and enable him to bear up cheerfully against those little evils and misfortunes which are common to human nature, and which, by a right improvement of them, will produce a satiety of joy, and an uninterrupted happiness.

At the same time that I would engage my reader to consider the world in its most agreeable lights, I must own there are many evils which naturally spring up amidst the entertainments that are provided for us; but these, if rightly considered, should be far from overcasting the mind with sorrow, or destroying that cheerfulness of temper which I have been recommending. This interspersion of evil with good, and pain with pleasure, in the works of nature, is very truly ascribed by Mr. Locke, in his Essay on Human Understanding, to a moral reason, in the following words:

“Beyond all this, we may find another reason why God hath scattered up and down several degrees of pleasure and pain, in all the things that environ and affect us, and blended them together, in almost all that our thoughts and senses have to do with; that we, finding imperfection, dissatisfaction, and want of complete happiness, in all the enjoyments which the creatures can afford us, might be led to seek it in the enjoyment of Him with whom ‘there is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore.’”

L

GESTURE.

Abest facundis gratia dictis. OVID. MET. xiii. 127.

Eloquent words a graceful manner want.

Most foreign writers, who have given any character of the English nation, whatever vices they ascribe to it, allow, in general, that the people are naturally modest. It proceeds, perhaps, from this our national virtue, that our orators are observed to make use of less gesture or action than those of other countries. Our preachers stand stock-still in the pulpit, and will not so much as move a finger to set off the best sermons in the world. We meet with the same speaking statues at our bars, and in all public places of debate. Our words flow from us in a smooth, continued stream, without those strainings of the voice, motions of the body, and majesty of the hand, which are so much celebrated in the orators of Greece and Rome. We can talk of life and death in cold blood, and keep our temper in a discourse which turns upon everything that is dear to us. Though our zeal breaks out in the finest tropes and figures, it is not able to stir a limb about us. I have heard it observed more than once, by those who have seen Italy, that an untravelled Englishman cannot relish all the beauties of Italian pictures, because the

postures which are expressed in them are often such as are peculiar to that country. One who has not seen an Italian in the pulpit, will not know what to make of that noble gesture in Raphael's picture of St. Paul preaching at Athens, where the apostle is represented as lifting up both his arms, and pouring out the thunder of his rhetoric amidst an audience of pagan philosophers.

It is certain that proper gestures, and vehement exertions of the voice, cannot be too much studied by a public orator. They are a kind of comment to what he utters, and enforce everything he says, with weak hearers, better than the strongest argument he can make use of. They keep the audience awake, and fix their attention to what is delivered to them, at the same time that they show the speaker is in earnest, and affected himself with what he so passionately recommends to others. Violent gesture and vociferation naturally shake the hearts of the ignorant, and fill them with a kind of religious horror. Nothing is more frequent than to see women weep and tremble at the sight of a moving preacher, though he is placed quite out of their hearing; as, in England, we very frequently see people lulled asleep with solid and elaborate discourses of piety, who would be warmed and transported out of themselves by the bellowing and distortions of enthusiasm.

If nonsense, when accompanied with such an emotion of voice and body, has such an influence on men's minds, what might we not expect from many of those

admirable discourses which are printed in our tongue, were they delivered with a becoming fervor, and with the most agreeable graces of voice and gesture !

We are told that the great Latin orator very much impaired his health by this *laterum contentio*, the vehemence of action, with which he used to deliver himself. The Greek orator was, likewise, so very famous for this particular in rhetoric, that one of his antagonists, whom he had banished from Athens, reading over the oration which had procured his banishment, and seeing his friends admire it, could not forbear asking them if they were so much affected by the bare reading of it, how much more they would have been alarmed, had they heard him actually throwing out such a storm of eloquence.

How cold and dead a figure, in comparison of these two great men, does an orator often make at the British bar, holding up his head with the most insipid serenity, and stroking the sides of a long wig, that reaches down to his middle ! The truth of it is, there is often nothing more ridiculous than the gestures of an English speaker ; you see some of them running their hands into their pockets as far as ever they can thrust them, and others looking with great attention on a piece of paper that has nothing written on it ; you may see many a smart rhetorician turning his hat in his hands, moulding it into several different cocks, examining sometimes the lining of it, and sometimes the button, during the whole course of his harangue. A deaf man would think he was cheapening a beaver, when, perhaps, he is talking

of the fate of the British nation. I remember, when I was a young man, and used to frequent Westminster Hall, there was a counsellor who never pleaded without a piece of pack-thread in his hand, which he used to twist about a thumb or a finger all the while he was speaking; the wags of those days used to call it "the thread of his discourse," for he was not able to utter a word without it. One of his clients, who was more merry than wise, stole it from him one day in the midst of his pleading; but he had better have left it alone, for he lost his cause by his jest.

I have all along acknowledged myself to be a dumb man, and therefore may be thought a very improper person to give rules for oratory; but I believe every one will agree with me in this, that we ought either to lay aside all kinds of gesture, which seems to be very suitable to the genius of our nation, or, at least, to make use of such only as are graceful and expressive.

O



TASTE.

Musæo contingere cuncta lepore.

LUCR. i. 933.

To grace each subject with enlivening wit.

GRATIAN very often recommends fine taste as the utmost perfection of an accomplished man.

As this word arises very often in conversation, I shall endeavor to give some account of it, and to lay

down rules how we may know whether we are possessed of it, and how we may acquire that fine taste of writing which is so much talked of among the polite world.

Most languages make use of this metaphor to express that faculty of the mind which distinguishes all the most concealed faults, and nicest perfections in writing. We may be sure this metaphor would not have been so general in all tongues, had there not been a very great conformity between that mental taste, which is the subject of this paper, and that sensitive taste, which gives us a relish of every different flavor that affects the palate. Accordingly, we find there are as many degrees of refinement in the intellectual faculty, as in the sense which is marked out by this common denomination.

I knew a person who possessed the one in so great a perfection, that, after having tasted ten different kinds of tea, he would distinguish, without seeing the color of it, the particular sort which was offered him; and not only so, but any two sorts of them that were mixed together in an equal proportion; nay, he has carried the experiment so far, as, upon tasting the composition of three different sorts, to name the parcels from whence the three several ingredients were taken. A man of a fine taste in writing will discern, after the same manner, not only the general beauties and imperfections of an author, but discover the several ways of thinking and expressing himself, which diversify him from all other authors, with the several foreign infusions of thought and language,

and the particular authors from whom they were borrowed.

After having thus far explained what is generally meant by a fine taste in writing, and shown the propriety of the metaphor which is used on this occasion, I think I may define it to be "that faculty of the soul which discerns the beauties of an author with pleasure, and the imperfections with dislike." If a man would know whether he is possessed of this faculty, I would have him read over the celebrated works of antiquity, which have stood the test of so many different ages and countries, or those works among the moderns which have the sanction of the politer part of our contemporaries. If, upon the perusal of such writings, he does not find himself delighted in an extraordinary manner, or if, upon reading the admired passages in such authors, he finds a coldness and indifference in his thoughts, he ought to conclude, not, as is too usual among tasteless readers, that the author wants those perfections which have been admired in him, but that he himself wants the faculty of discovering them.

He should, in the second place, be very careful to observe, whether he tastes the distinguishing perfections, or, if I may be allowed to call them so, the specific qualities of the author whom he peruses; whether he is particularly pleased with Livy for his manner of telling a story, with Sallust for his entering into those internal principles of action which arise from the characters and manners of the persons he describes, or, with Tacitus, for his displaying

those outward motives of safety and interest which give birth to the whole series of transactions which he relates.

He may, likewise, consider how differently he is affected by the same thought which presents itself in a great writer, from what he is when he finds it delivered by a person of an ordinary genius; for there is as much difference in apprehending a thought clothed in Cicero's language and that of a common author, as in seeing an object by the light of a taper or by the light of the sun.

It is very difficult to lay down rules for the acquirement of such a taste as that I am here speaking of. The faculty must in some degree be born with us; and it very often happens that those who have other qualities in perfection, are wholly void of this. One of the most eminent mathematicians of the age has assured me, that the great pleasure he took in reading Virgil was in examining the voyage of Æneas by the map; as I question not but many a modern compiler of history would be delighted with little more in that divine author than the bare matters of fact.

But, notwithstanding this faculty must in some measure be born with us, there are several methods for cultivating and improving it, and without which it will be very uncertain, and of little use to the person that possesses it. The most natural method for this purpose is to be conversant among the writings of the most polite authors. A man who has any relish for fine writing, either discovers new

beauties, or receives stronger impressions, from the masterly strokes of a great author every time he peruses him; besides that he naturally wears himself into the same manner of speaking and thinking.

Conversation with men of a polite genius is another method for improving our natural taste. It is impossible for a man of the greatest parts to consider anything in its whole extent and in all its variety of lights. Every man, besides those general observations which are to be made upon an author, forms several reflections that are peculiar to his own manner of thinking; so that conversation will naturally furnish us with hints which we did not attend to, and make us enjoy other men's parts and reflections as well as our own. This is the best reason I can give for the observation which several have made, that men of great genius in the same way of writing, seldom rise up singly, but at certain periods of time appear together and in a body; as they did at Rome in the reign of Augustus, and in Greece, about the age of Socrates. I cannot think that Corneille, Racine, Molière, Boileau, La Fontaine, Bruyere, Bossu, or the Daciers, would have written so well as they have done, had they not been friends and contemporaries.

It is likewise necessary for a man who would form to himself a finished taste of good writing, to be well versed in the works of the best critics both ancient and modern. I must confess that I could wish there were authors of this kind, who, beside the mechanical rules, which a man of very little taste

may discourse upon, would enter into the very spirit and soul of fine writing, and show us the several sources of that pleasure which rises in the mind upon the perusal of a noble work. Thus, although in poetry it be absolutely necessary that the unities of time, place, and action, with other points of the same nature, should be thoroughly explained and understood, there is still something more essential to the art, something that elevates and astonishes the fancy, and gives a greatness of mind to the reader, which few of the critics, besides Longinus, have considered.

Our general taste, in England, is for epigram, turns of wit, and forced conceits, which have no manner of influence, either for the bettering or enlarging the mind of him who reads them, and have been carefully avoided by the greatest writers, both among the ancients and moderns. I have endeavored, in several of my speculations, to banish this Gothic taste which has taken possession among us. I entertained the town for a week together with an essay upon wit, in which I endeavored to detect several of those false kinds which have been admired in the different ages of the world, and, at the same time, to show wherein the nature of true wit consists. I afterwards gave an instance of the great force which lies in a natural simplicity of thought to affect the mind of the reader, from such vulgar pieces as have little else besides this single qualification to recommend them. I have likewise examined the works of the greatest poet which our nation, or perhaps any other,

has produced, and particularized most of those rational and manly beauties which give a value to that divine work. I shall, next Saturday, enter upon an essay on "The Pleasures of the Imagination," which, though it shall consider that subject at large, will, perhaps, suggest to the reader what it is that gives a beauty to many passages of the finest writers, both in prose and verse. As an undertaking of this nature is entirely new, I question not but it will be received with candor.

O

Mens
463

THE GOLDEN SCALES.

*Omnia quæ sensu voluntur vota diurno,
Pectore sopito reddit amica quies.
Venator defessa toro cum membra reponit,
Mens tamen ad silvas et sua lustra redit.
Judicibus lites, aurigæ somnia currus,
Vanaque nocturnis meta cavetur equis.
Me quoque Musarum studium sub nocte silenti
Artibus assuetis sollicitare solet.*

CLAUD. PRÆF. IN VI CONS. HONOR.

In sleep, when fancy is let loose to play,
Our dreams repeat the wishes of the day.
Though further toil his tired limbs refuse,
The dreaming hunter still the chase pursues.
The judge a-bed dispenses still the laws,
And sleeps again o'er the unfinished cause.
The dozing racer hears his chariot roll,
Smacks the vain whip, and shuns the fancied goal.
Me too, the Muses, in the silent night,
With wonted chimes of jingling verse delight.

I WAS lately entertaining myself with comparing Homer's balance, in which Jupiter is represented as weighing the fates of Hector and Achilles, with a passage of Virgil, wherein that deity is introduced as weighing the fates of Turnus and Æneas. I then considered how the same way of thinking prevailed in the eastern parts of the world, as in those noble passages of Scripture, wherein we are told, that the great king of Babylon, the day before his death, had

been "weighed in the balance, and been found wanting." In other places of the holy writings, the Almighty is described as weighing the mountains in scales, making the weight for the winds, knowing the balancings of the clouds; and in others, as weighing the actions of men, and laying their calamities together in a balance. Milton, as I have observed in a former paper, had an eye to several of these foregoing instances in that beautiful description wherein he represents the archangel and the evil spirit as addressing themselves for the combat, but parted by the balance which appeared in the heavens, and weighed the consequences of such a battle.

Th' Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
 Hung forth in heaven his golden scales, yet seen
 Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign;
 Wherein all things created first he weighed,
 The pendulous round earth, with balanced air,
 In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
 Battles and realms; in these he put two weights,
 The sequel each of parting and of fight.
 The latter quick up flew, and kicked the beam;
 Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the fiend:
 "Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine:
 Neither our own, but given. What folly, then,
 To boast what arms can do, since thine no more
 Than Heaven permits; nor mine, though doubled more
 To trample thee as mire! For proof look up,
 And read thy lot in yon celestial sign,
 Where thou art weighed, and shown how light, how weak,
 If thou resist." The fiend looked up, and knew
 His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
 Murm'ring, and with him fled the shades of night.

These several amusing thoughts, having taken possession of my mind some time before I went to sleep, and mingling themselves with my ordinary ideas, raised in my imagination a very odd kind of vision. I was, methought, replaced in my study, and seated in my elbow-chair, where I had indulged the foregoing speculations with my lamp burning by me as usual. Whilst I was here meditating on several subjects of morality, and considering the nature of many virtues and vices, as materials for those discourses with which I daily entertain the public, I saw, methought, a pair of golden scales hanging by a chain of the same metal, over the table that stood before me; when, on a sudden, there were great heaps of weights thrown down on each side of them. I found, upon examining these weights, they showed the value of everything that is in esteem among men. I made an essay of them, by putting the weight of wisdom in one scale, and that of riches in another; upon which, the latter, to show its comparative lightness, immediately flew up and kicked the beam.

But, before I proceed, I must inform my reader, that these weights did not exert their natural gravity till they were laid in the golden balance, insomuch that I could not guess which was light or heavy whilst I held them in my hand. This I found by several instances; for upon my laying a weight in one of the scales, which was inscribed by the word "eternity," though I threw in that of time, prosperity, affliction, wealth, poverty, interest, success, with many other weights, which in my hand seemed very

ponderous, they were not able to stir the opposite balance; nor could they have prevailed, though assisted with the weight of the sun, the stars, and the earth.

Upon emptying the scales, I laid several titles and honors, with pomps, triumphs, and many weights of the like nature, in one of them; and seeing a little glittering weight lie by me, I threw it accidentally into the other scale, when, to my great surprise, it proved so exact a counterpoise that it kept the balance in an equilibrium. This little glittering weight was inscribed upon the edges of it with the word "vanity." I found there were several other weights which were equally heavy, and exact counterpoises to one another: a few of them I tried, as avarice and poverty, riches and content, with some others.

There were, likewise, several weights that were of the same figure, and seemed to correspond with each other, but were entirely different when thrown into the scales: as religion and hypocrisy, pedantry and learning, wit and vivacity, superstition and devotion, gravity and wisdom, with many others.

I observed one particular weight lettered on both sides; and, upon applying myself to the reading of it, I found on one side written, "In the dialect of men," and underneath it, "calamities;" on the other side was written, "In the language of the gods," and underneath, "blessings." I found the intrinsic value of this weight to be much greater than I imagined, for it overpowered health, wealth, good-fortune, and many other weights, which were much more ponderous in my hand than the other.

There is a saying among the Scotch, that an ounce of mother-wit is worth a pound of clergy: I was sensible of the truth of this saying when I saw the difference between the weight of natural parts and that of learning. The observations which I made upon these two weights opened to me a new field of discoveries; for, notwithstanding the weight of the natural parts was much heavier than that of learning, I observed that it weighed a hundred times heavier than it did before, when I put learning into the same scale with it. I made the same observation upon faith and morality; for, notwithstanding the latter outweighed the former separately, it received a thousand times more additional weight from its conjunction with the former, than what it had by itself. This odd phenomenon showed itself in other particulars, as in wit and judgment, philosophy and religion, justice and humanity, zeal and charity, depth of sense and perspicuity of style, with innumerable other particulars too long to be mentioned in this paper.

As a dream seldom fails of dashing seriousness with impertinence, mirth with gravity, methought I made several other experiments of a more ludicrous nature, by one of which I found that an English octavo was very often heavier than a French folio; and, by another, that an old Greek or Latin author weighed down a whole library of moderns. Seeing one of my "Spectators" lying by me, I laid it into one of the scales, and flung a two-penny piece into the other. The reader will not inquire into the event, if he re-

members the first trial which I have recorded in this paper. I afterwards threw both the sexes into the balance; but, as it is not for my interest to disoblige either of them, I shall desire to be excused from telling the result of this experiment. Having an opportunity of this nature in my hands, I could not forbear throwing into one scale the principles of a Tory, and into the other those of a Whig; but, as I have all along declared this to be a neutral paper, I shall likewise desire to be silent under this head also, though, upon examining one of the weights, I saw the word "TEKEL" engraven on it in capital letters.

I made many other experiments; and, though I have not room for them all in this day's speculation, I may perhaps reserve them for another. I shall only add, that, upon my awaking, I was sorry to find my golden scales vanished; but resolved for the future to learn this lesson from them, not to despise or value any things for their appearances, but to regulate my esteem and passions towards them according to their real and intrinsic value.

C

METHOD.

Lucidus ordo.

HOR. ARS POET. 41.

Method gives light.

AMONG my daily papers which I bestow on the public, there are some which are written with regularity and method, and others that run out into the

wildness of those compositions which go by the name of Essays. As for the first, I have the whole scheme of the discourse in my mind before I set pen to paper. In the other kind of writing, it is sufficient that I have several thoughts on a subject, without troubling myself to range them in such order, that they may seem to grow out of one another, and be disposed under the proper heads. Seneca and Montaigne are patterns for writing in this last kind, as Tully and Aristotle excel in the other. When I read an author of genius who writes without method, I fancy myself in a wood that abounds with a great many noble objects, rising among one another in the greatest confusion and disorder. When I read a methodical discourse, I am in a regular plantation, and can place myself in its several centres, so as to take a view of all the lines and walks that are struck from them. You may ramble in the one a whole day together, and every moment discover something or other that is new to you; but when you have done, you will have but a confused imperfect notion of the place: in the other, your eye commands the whole prospect, and gives you such an idea of it as is not easily worn out of the memory.

Irregularity and want of method are only supportable in men of great learning or genius, who are often too full to be exact, and therefore choose to throw down their pearls in heaps before the reader, rather than be at the pains of stringing them.

Method is of advantage to a work, both in respect to the writer and the reader. In regard to the first,

it is a great help to his invention. When a man has planned his discourse, he finds a great many thoughts rising out of every head, that do not offer themselves upon the general survey of a subject. His thoughts are at the same time more intelligible, and better discover their drift and meaning, when they are placed in their proper lights, and follow one another in a regular series, than when they are thrown together without order and connection. There is always an obscurity in confusion; and the same sentence that would have enlightened the reader in one part of a discourse, perplexes him in another. For the same reason, likewise, every thought in a methodical discourse shows itself in its greatest beauty, as the several figures in a piece of painting receive new grace from their disposition in the picture. The advantages of a reader from a methodical discourse are correspondent with those of the writer. He comprehends everything easily, takes it in with pleasure, and retains it long.

Method is not less requisite in ordinary conversation than in writing, provided a man would talk to make himself understood. I, who hear a thousand coffee-house debates every day, am very sensible of this want of method in the thoughts of my honest countrymen. There is not one dispute in ten which is managed in those schools of politics, where, after the three first sentences, the question is not entirely lost. Our disputants put me in mind of the scuttlefish, that, when he is unable to extricate himself, blackens all the water about him till he becomes in-

visible. The man who does not know how to methodize his thoughts, has always, to borrow a phrase from the Dispensary, "a barren superfluity of words;" the fruit is lost amidst the exuberance of leaves.

Tom Puzzle is one of the most eminent immethodical disputants of any that has fallen under my observation. Tom has read enough to make him very impertinent; his knowledge is sufficient to raise doubts, but not to clear them. It is a pity that he has so much learning, or that he has not a great deal more. With these qualifications Tom sets up for a free-thinker, finds a great many things to blame in the constitution of his country, and gives shrewd intimations that he does not believe in another world. In short, Puzzle is an atheist as much as his parts will give him leave. He has got about half a dozen commonplace topics, into which he never fails to turn the conversation, whatever was the occasion of it. Though the matter in debate be about Douay or Denain, it is ten to one but half his discourse runs upon the unreasonableness of bigotry and priestcraft. This makes Mr. Puzzle the admiration of all those who have less sense than himself, and the contempt of all those who have more. There is none in town whom Tom dreads so much as my friend Will Dry. Will, who is acquainted with Tom's logic, when he finds him running off the question, cuts him short with a "What then? We allow all this to be true; but what is it to our present purpose?" I have known Tom eloquent half an hour together, and triumphing, as he thought, in the superiority of the

argument, when he has been nonplussed on a sudden by Mr. Dry's desiring him to tell the company what it was that he endeavored to prove. In short, Dry is a man of a clear methodical head, but few words, and gains the same advantage over Puzzle that a small body of regular troops would gain over a numberless undisciplined militia.



WAYS OF GIVING ADVICE.

Lectorem delectando, pariterque monendo.

HOR. ARS POET. 343.

Mixing together profit and delight.

THERE is nothing which we receive with so much reluctance as advice. We look upon the man who gives it us as offering an affront to our understanding, and treating us like children or idiots. We consider the instruction as an implicit censure, and the zeal which any one shows for our good on such an occasion as a piece of presumption or impertinence. The truth of it is, the person who pretends to advise, does, in that particular, exercise a superiority over us, and can have no other reason for it, but that, in comparing us with himself, he thinks us defective either in our conduct or our understanding. For these reasons, there is nothing so difficult as the art of making advice agreeable; and indeed all the writers, both ancient and modern, have distinguished

themselves among one another, according to the perfection at which they have arrived in this art. How many devices have been made use of to render this bitter portion palatable! Some convey their instructions to us in the best chosen words, others in the most harmonious numbers; some in points of wit, and others in short proverbs.

But, among all the different ways of giving counsel, I think the finest, and that which pleases the most universally, is fable, in whatsoever shape it appears. If we consider this way of instructing or giving advice, it excels all others, because it is the least shocking, and the least subject to those exceptions which I have before mentioned.

This will appear to us, if we reflect, in the first place, that upon the reading of a fable we are made to believe we advise ourselves. We peruse the author for the sake of the story, and consider the precepts rather as our own conclusions than his instructions. The moral insinuates itself imperceptibly; we are taught by surprise, and become wiser and better unawares. In short, by this method, a man is so far overreached as to think he is directing himself, whilst he is following the dictates of another, and consequently is not sensible of that which is the most displeasing circumstance in advice.

In the next place, if we look into human nature, we shall find that the mind is never so much pleased as when she exerts herself in any action that gives her an idea of her own perfections and abilities. This natural pride and ambition of the soul is very

much gratified in the reading of a fable; for, in writings of this kind, the reader comes in for half of the performance; everything appears to him like a discovery of his own; he is busied all the while in applying characters and circumstances, and is in this respect both a reader and a composer. It is no wonder, therefore, that on such occasions, when the mind is thus pleased with itself, and amused with its own discoveries, it is highly delighted with the writing which is the occasion of it. For this reason the "Absalom and Achitophel"* was one of the most popular poems that ever appeared in English. The poetry is indeed very fine; but had it been much finer, it would not have so much pleased, without a plan which gave the reader an opportunity of exerting his own talents.

This oblique manner of giving advice is so inoffensive, that if we look into ancient histories, we find the wise men of old very often chose to give counsel to their kings in fables. To omit many which will occur to every one's memory, there is a pretty instance of this nature in a Turkish tale, which I do not like the worse for that little Oriental extravagance which is mixed with it.

We are told that the Sultan Mahmoud, by his perpetual wars abroad and his tyranny at home, had

* A memorable satire, written by Dryden against the faction which, by Lord Shaftesbury's incitement, set the Duke of Monmouth at their head. Of this poem, in which personal satire is applied to the support of public principles, the sale was so large that it is said not to have been equalled, but by Sacheverell's trial.

filled his dominions with ruin and desolation, and half unpeopled the Persian empire. The vizier to this great Sultan, whether a humorist or an enthusiast, we are not informed, pretended to have learned of a certain dervise to understand the language of birds, so that there was not a bird that could open his mouth but the vizier knew what it was he said. As he was one evening with the Sultan, in their return from hunting, they saw a couple of owls near a tree that grew near an old wall out of a heap of rubbish. "I would fain know," says the Sultan, "what those two owls are saying to one another; listen to their discourse, and give me an account of it." The vizier approached the tree, pretending to be very attentive to the two owls. Upon his return to the Sultan, "Sir," says he, "I have heard part of their conversation, but dare not tell you what it is." The Sultan would not be satisfied with such an answer, but forced him to repeat word for word everything the owls had said. "You must know, then," said the vizier, "that one of these owls has a son, and the other a daughter, between whom they are now upon a treaty of marriage. The father of the son said to the father of the daughter in my hearing, 'Brother, I consent to this marriage, provided you will settle upon your daughter fifty ruined villages for her portion.' To which the father of the daughter replied, 'Instead of fifty, I will give her five hundred, if you please. God grant a long life to Sultan Mahmoud! Whilst he reigns over us, we shall never want ruined villages.'"

The story says, the Sultan was so touched with the fable, that he rebuilt the towns and villages which had been destroyed, and from that time forward consulted the good of his people.

To fill up my paper, I shall add a most ridiculous piece of natural magic, which was taught by no less a philosopher than Democritus, namely, that if the blood of certain birds, which he mentioned, were mixed together, it would produce a serpent of such a wonderful virtue, that whoever did eat it should be skilled in the language of birds, and understand everything they said to one another. Whether the dervise above mentioned might not have eaten such a serpent I shall leave to the determination of the learned.

O



DEATH OF SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY.

Heu pietas ! heu prisca fides ! VIRG. ÆN. vi. 878.

Mirror of ancient faith !

Undaunted worth ! Inviolable truth !

DRYDEN.

WE last night received a piece of ill-news at our club, which very sensibly afflicted every one of us. I question not but my readers themselves will be troubled at the hearing of it. To keep them no longer in suspense, Sir Roger de Coverley is dead. He departed this life at his house in the country, after a few weeks' sickness. Sir Andrew Freeport

has a letter from one of his correspondents in those parts, that informs him the old man caught a cold at the county sessions, as he was very warmly promoting an address of his own penning, in which he succeeded according to his wishes. But this particular comes from a Whig justice of the peace, who was always Sir Roger's enemy and antagonist. I have letters both from the chaplain and Captain Sentry, which mention nothing of it, but are filled with many particulars to the honor of the good old man. I have likewise a letter from the butler, who took so much care of me last summer when I was at the knight's house. As my friend the butler mentions, in the simplicity of his heart, several circumstances the others have passed over in silence, I shall give my reader a copy of his letter without any alteration or diminution.

“HONORED SIR:

“Knowing that you was my old master's good friend, I could not forbear sending you the melancholy news of his death, which has afflicted the whole country, as well as his poor servants, who loved him, I may say, better than we did our lives. I am afraid he caught his death the last county sessions, where he would go to see justice done to a poor widow woman, and her fatherless children, that had been wronged by a neighboring gentleman; for you know, sir, my good master was always the poor man's friend. Upon his coming home, the first complaint he made was, that he had lost his roast-beef,

stomach, not being able to touch a sirloin, which was served up according to custom; and you know he used to take great delight in it. From that time forward he grew worse and worse, but still kept a good heart to the last. Indeed, we were once in great hopes of his recovery, upon a kind message that was sent him from the widow lady whom he had made love to the last forty years of his life; but this only proved a lightning before death. He has bequeathed to this lady, as a token of his love, a great pearl necklace, and a couple of silver bracelets set with jewels, which belonged to my good old lady his mother. He has bequeathed the fine white gelding that he used to ride a hunting upon to his chaplain, because he thought he would be kind to him; and has left you all his books. He has, moreover, bequeathed to the chaplain a very pretty tenement with good lands about it. It being a very cold day when he made his will, he left for mourning to every man in the parish, a great frieze-coat, and to every woman a black riding-hood. It was a moving sight to see him take leave of his poor servants, commending us all for our fidelity, whilst we were not able to speak a word for weeping. As we most of us are grown gray-headed in our dear master's service, he has left us pensions and legacies, which we may live very comfortably upon the remaining part of our days. He has bequeathed a great deal more in charity, which is not yet come to my knowledge, and it is peremptorily said in the parish, that he has left money to build a steeple to the church, for he was heard to say some time ago, that, if he lived two

years longer, Coverley church should have a steeple to it. The chaplain tells everybody that he made a very good end, and never speaks of him without tears. He was buried, according to his own directions, among the family of the Coverleys, on the left hand of his father, Sir Arthur. The coffin was carried by six of his tenants, and the pall held up by six of the quorum. The whole parish followed the corpse with heavy hearts, and in their mourning suits: the men in frieze, and the women in riding-hoods. Captain Sentry, my master's nephew, has taken possession of the Hall House, and the whole estate. When my old master saw him a little before his death, he shook him by the hand, and wished him joy of the estate which was falling to him, desiring him only to make a good use of it, and to pay the several legacies, and the gifts of charity, which he told him he had left as quitrents upon the estate. The captain truly seems a courteous man, though he says but little. He makes much of those whom my master loved, and shows great kindness to the old house-dog, that you know my poor master was so fond of. It would have gone to your heart to have heard the moans the dumb creature made on the day of my master's death. He has never enjoyed himself since; no more has any of us. It was the melancholiest day for the poor people that ever happened in Worcestershire. This being all from,

“Honored sir,

“Your most sorrowful servant,

“EDWARD BISCUIT.

“P. S. My master desired, some weeks before he died, that a book, which comes to you by the carrier, should be given to Sir Andrew Freeport, in his name.”

This letter, notwithstanding the poor butler's manner of writing it, gave us such an idea of our good old friend, that upon the reading of it there was not a dry eye in the club. Sir Andrew, opening the book, found it to be a collection of acts of parliament. There was in particular the Act of Uniformity, with some passages in it marked by Sir Roger's own hand. Sir Andrew found that they related to two or three points which he had disputed with Sir Roger, the last time he appeared at the club. Sir Andrew, who would have been merry at such an incident on another occasion, at the sight of the old man's handwriting burst into tears, and put the book into his pocket. Captain Sentry informs me that the knight has left rings and mourning for every one in the club.

O

MACAULAY'S
ESSAY ON ADDISON.

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF ADDISON.*

(*Edinburgh Review*, July, 1843.)

SOME reviewers are of opinion that a lady who dares to publish a book renounces by that act the franchises appertaining to her sex, and can claim no exemption from the utmost rigor of critical procedure. From that opinion we dissent. We admit, indeed, that in a country which boasts of many female writers, eminently qualified by their talents and acquirements to influence the public mind, it would be of most pernicious consequence that inaccurate history or unsound philosophy should be suffered to pass uncensured, merely because the offender chanced to be a lady. But we conceive that, on such occasions, a critic would do well to imitate the courteous knight who found himself compelled by duty to keep the lists against Bradamante. He, we are told, de-

* The Life of Joseph Addison. By LUCY AIKIN. 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1843.

fended successfully the cause of which he was the champion; but before the fight began, exchanged Balisarda for a less deadly sword, of which he carefully blunted the point and edge.*

Nor are the immunities of sex the only immunities which Miss Aikin may rightfully plead. Several of her works, and especially the very pleasing "Memoirs of the Reign of James the First," have fully entitled her to the privileges enjoyed by good writers. One of those privileges we hold to be this, that such writers, when, either from the unlucky choice of a subject, or from the indolence too often produced by success, they happen to fail, shall not be subjected to the severe discipline which it is sometimes necessary to inflict upon dunces and impostors, but shall merely be reminded by a gentle touch, like that with which the Laputan flapper roused his dreaming lord, that it is high time to wake.

Our readers will probably infer from what we have said that Miss Aikin's book has disappointed us. The truth is, that she is not well acquainted with her subject. No person who is not familiar with the political and literary history of England during the reigns of William III., of Anne, and of George I., can possibly write a good life of Addison. Now, we mean no reproach to Miss Aikin, and many will think that we pay her a compliment, when we say that her studies have taken a different direction. She is better acquainted with Shakspeare and Raleigh than with Congreve and Prior; and is far more

* Orlando Furioso, xlv. 68.

at home among the ruffs and peaked beards of Theobald's than among the Steenkirks and flowing periwigs which surrounded Queen Anne's tea-table at Hampton. She seems to have written about the Elizabethan age, because she had read much about it; she seems, on the other hand, to have read a little about the age of Addison, because she had determined to write about it. The consequence is that she has had to describe men and things without having either a correct or a vivid idea of them, and that she has often fallen into errors of a very serious kind. The reputation which Miss Aikin has justly earned stands so high, and the charm of Addison's letters is so great, that a second edition of this work may probably be required. If so, we hope that every paragraph will be revised, and that every date and fact about which there can be the smallest doubt will be carefully verified.

To Addison himself we are bound by a sentiment as much like affection as any sentiment can be, which is inspired by one who has been sleeping a hundred and twenty years in Westminster Abbey. We trust, however, that this feeling will not betray us into that abject idolatry which we have often had occasion to reprehend in others, and which seldom fails to make both the idolater and the idol ridiculous. A man of genius and virtue is but a man. All his powers cannot be equally developed; nor can we expect from him perfect self-knowledge. We need not, therefore, hesitate to admit that Addison has left us some compositions which do not rise above mediocrity, some

heroic poems hardly equal to Parnell's, some criticism as superficial as Dr. Blair's, and a tragedy not very much better than Dr. Johnson's. It is praise enough to say of a writer that, in a high department of literature, in which many eminent writers have distinguished themselves, he has had no equal; and this may with strict justice be said of Addison.

As a man, he may not have deserved the adoration which he received from those who, bewitched by his fascinating society, and indebted for all the comforts of life to his generous and delicate friendship, worshipped him nightly, in his favorite temple at Button's. But, after full inquiry and impartial reflection, we have long been convinced that he deserved as much love and esteem as can be justly claimed by any of our infirm and erring race. Some blemishes may undoubtedly be detected in his character; but the more carefully it is examined, the more will it appear, to use the phrase of the old anatomists, sound in the noble parts, free from all taint of perfidy, of cowardice, of cruelty, of ingratitude, of envy. Men may easily be named in whom some particular good disposition has been more conspicuous than in Addison. But the just harmony of qualities, the exact temper between the stern and the humane virtues, the habitual observance of every law, not only of moral rectitude, but of moral grace and dignity, distinguish him from all men who have been tried by equally strong temptations, and about whose conduct we possess equally full information.

His father was the Reverend Lancelot Addison,

who, though eclipsed by his more celebrated son, made some figure in the world, and occupies with credit two folio pages in the *Biographia Britannica*. Lancelot was sent up, as a poor scholar, from Westmoreland to Queen's College, Oxford, in the time of the Commonwealth, made some progress in learning, became, like most of his fellow-students, a violent Royalist, lampooned the heads of the university, and was forced to ask pardon on his bended knees. When he had left college, he earned a humble subsistence by reading the liturgy of the fallen Church to the families of those sturdy squires whose manor-houses were scattered over the Wild of Sussex. After the Restoration, his loyalty was rewarded with the post of chaplain to the garrison of Dunkirk. When Dunkirk was sold to France, he lost his employment. But Tangier had been ceded by Portugal to England as part of the marriage portion of the Infanta Catharine; and to Tangier Lancelot Addison was sent. A more miserable situation can hardly be conceived. It was difficult to say whether the unfortunate settlers were more tormented by the heats or by the rains, by the soldiers within the wall or by the Moors without it. One advantage the chaplain had: he enjoyed an excellent opportunity of studying the history and manners of Jews and Mahometans; and of this opportunity he appears to have made excellent use. On his return to England, after some years of banishment, he published an interesting volume on the "Polity and Religion of Barbary," and another on the "Hebrew Customs and the State of Rabbinical

Learning." He rose to eminence in his profession, and became one of the royal chaplains, a Doctor of Divinity, Archdeacon of Salisbury, and Dean of Lichfield. It is said that he would have been made a bishop after the Revolution, if he had not given offence to the government by strenuously opposing, in the Convocation of 1689, the liberal policy of William and Tillotson.

In 1672, not long after Dr. Addison's return from Tangier, his son Joseph was born. Of Joseph's childhood we know little. He learned his rudiments at schools in his father's neighborhood, and was then sent to the Charter House. The anecdotes which are popularly related about his boyish tricks do not harmonize very well with what we know of his riper years. There remains a tradition that he was the ringleader in a barring out, and another tradition that he ran away from school and hid himself in a wood, where he fed on berries and slept in a hollow tree, till after a long search he was discovered and brought home. If these stories be true, it would be curious to know by what moral discipline so mutinous and enterprising a lad was transformed into the gentlest and most modest of men.

We have abundant proof that, whatever Joseph's pranks may have been, he pursued his studies vigorously and successfully. At fifteen he was not only fit for the university, but carried thither a classical taste and a stock of learning which would have done honor to a Master of Arts. He was entered at Queen's College, Oxford; but he had not been many months there,

when some of his Latin verses fell by accident into the hands of Dr. Lancaster, Dean of Magdalene College. The young scholar's diction and versification were already such as veteran professors might envy. Dr. Lancaster was desirous to serve a boy of such promise; nor was an opportunity long wanting. The Revolution had just taken place; and nowhere had it been hailed with more delight than at Magdalene College. That great and opulent corporation had been treated by James, and by his chancellor, with an insolence and injustice which, even in such a prince and in such a minister, may justly excite amazement, and which had done more than even the prosecution of the bishops to alienate the Church of England from the throne. A president, duly elected, had been violently expelled from his dwelling; a Papist had been set over the society by a royal mandate: the Fellows who, in conformity with their oaths, had refused to submit to this usurper, had been driven forth from their quiet cloisters and gardens, to die of want or to live on charity. But the day of redress and retribution speedily came. The intruders were ejected; the venerable House was again inhabited by its old inmates; learning flourished under the rule of the wise and virtuous Hough; and with learning was united a mild and liberal spirit too often wanting in the princely colleges of Oxford. In consequence of the troubles through which the society had passed, there had been no valid election of new members during the year 1688. In 1689, therefore, there was twice the ordinary number of vacancies; and thus Dr.

Lancaster found it easy to procure for his young friend admittance to the advantages of a foundation then generally esteemed the wealthiest in Europe.

At Magdalene, Addison resided during ten years. He was at first one of those scholars who are called Demies, but was subsequently elected a Fellow. His college is still proud of his name; his portrait still hangs in the hall; and strangers are still told that his favorite walk was under the elms which fringe the meadow on the banks of the Cherwell. It is said, and is highly probable, that he was distinguished among his fellow-students by the delicacy of his feelings, by the shyness of his manners, and by the assiduity with which he often prolonged his studies far into the night. It is certain that his reputation for ability and learning stood high. Many years later, the ancient doctors of Magdalene continued to talk in their common room of his boyish compositions, and expressed their sorrow that no copy of exercises so remarkable had been preserved.

It is proper, however, to remark that Miss Aikin has committed the error, very pardonable in a lady, of overrating Addison's classical attainments. In one department of learning, indeed, his proficiency was such as it is hardly possible to overrate. His knowledge of the Latin poets, from Lucretius and Catullus down to Claudian and Prudentius, was singularly exact and profound. He understood them thoroughly, entered into their spirit, and had the finest and most discriminating perception of all their peculiarities of style and melody; nay, he copied their

manner with admirable skill, and surpassed, we think, all their British imitators who had preceded him, Buchanan and Milton alone excepted. This is high praise; and beyond this we cannot with justice go. It is clear that Addison's serious attention during his residence at the university was almost entirely concentrated on Latin poetry, and that, if he did not wholly neglect other provinces of ancient literature, he vouchsafed to them only a cursory glance. He does not appear to have attained more than an ordinary acquaintance with the political and moral writers of Rome; nor was his own Latin prose by any means equal to his Latin verse. His knowledge of Greek, though doubtless such as was, in his time, thought respectable at Oxford, was evidently less than that which many lads now carry away every year from Eton and Rugby. A minute examination of his works, if we had time to make such an examination, would fully bear out these remarks. We will briefly advert to a few of the facts on which our judgment is grounded.

Great praise is due to the Notes which Addison appended to his version of the second and third books of the *Metamorphoses*. Yet those notes, while they show him to have been, in his own domain, an accomplished scholar, show also how confined that domain was. They are rich in apposite references to Virgil, Statius, and Claudian; but they contain not a single illustration drawn from the Greek poets. Now, if, in the whole compass of Latin literature, there be a passage which stands in need of illustra-

tion drawn from the Greek poets, it is the story of Pentheus in the third book of the *Metamorphoses*. Ovid was indebted for that story to Euripides and Theocritus, both of whom he has sometimes followed minutely. But neither to Euripides nor to Theocritus does Addison make the faintest allusion; and we, therefore, believe that we do not wrong him by supposing that he had little or no knowledge of their works.

His travels in Italy, again, abound with classical quotations happily introduced; but scarcely one of those quotations is in prose. He draws more illustrations from Ausonius and Manilius than from Cicero. Even his notions of the political and military affairs of the Romans seem to be derived from poets and poetasters. Spots made memorable by events which have changed the destinies of the world, and which have been worthily recorded by great historians, bring to his mind only scraps of some ancient versifier. In the gorge of the Apennines he naturally remembers the hardships which Hannibal's army endured, and proceeds to cite, not the authentic narrative of Polybius, not the picturesque narrative of Livy, but the languid hexameters of Silius Italicus. On the banks of the Rubicon he never thinks of Plutarch's lively description, or of the stern conciseness of the *Commentaries*, or of those letters to Atticus which so forcibly express the alternations of hope and fear in a sensitive mind at a great crisis. His only authority for the events of the civil war is Lucan.

All the best ancient works of art at Rome and

Florence are Greek. Addison saw them, however, without recalling one single verse of Pindar, of Callimachus, or of the Attic dramatists; but they brought to his recollection innumerable passages of Horace, Juvenal, Statius, and Ovid.

The same may be said of the "Treatise on Medals." In that pleasing work we find about three hundred passages extracted with great judgment from the Roman poets; but we do not recollect a single passage taken from any Roman orator or historian; and we are confident that not a line is quoted from any Greek writer. No person, who had derived all his information on the subject of medals from Addison, would suspect that the Greek coins were in historical interest equal, and in beauty of execution far superior to those of Rome.

If it were necessary to find any further proof that Addison's classical knowledge was confined within narrow limits, that proof would be furnished by his "Essay on the Evidences of Christianity." The Roman poets throw little or no light on the literary and historical questions which he is under the necessity of examining in that essay. He is, therefore, left completely in the dark; and it is melancholy to see how helplessly he gropes his way from blunder to blunder. He assigns, as grounds for his religious belief, stories as absurd as that of the Cock-Lane ghost, and forgeries as rank as Ireland's Vortigern, puts faith in the lie about the Thundering Legion, is convinced that Tiberius moved the senate to admit Jesus among the gods, and pronounces the letter of Agbarus, king of Edessa,

to be a record of great authority. Nor were these errors the effects of superstition; for to superstition Addison was by no means prone. The truth is that he was writing about what he did not understand. X

Miss Aikin has discovered a letter from which it appears that, while Addison resided at Oxford, he was one of several writers whom the booksellers engaged to make an English version of Herodotus; and she infers that he must have been a good Greek scholar. We can allow very little weight to this argument, when we consider that his fellow-laborers were to have been Boyle and Blackmore. Boyle is remembered chiefly as the nominal author of the worst book on Greek history and philology that ever was printed; and this book, bad as it is, Boyle was unable to produce without help. Of Blackmore's attainments in the ancient tongues it may be sufficient to say that, in his prose, he has confounded an aphorism with an apophthegm, and that when, in his verse, he treats of classical subjects, his habit is to regale his readers with four false quantities to a page.

It is probable that the classical acquirements of Addison were of as much service to him as if they had been more extensive. The world generally gives its admiration, not to the man who does what nobody else even attempts to do, but to the man who does best what multitudes do well. Bentley was so immeasurably superior to all the other scholars of his time that few among them could discover his superiority. But the accomplishment in which Addison excelled his contemporaries was then, as it is now, highly

valued and assiduously cultivated at all English seats of learning. Everybody who had been at a public school had written Latin verses; many had written such verses with tolerable success, and were quite able to appreciate, though by no means able to rival, the skill with which Addison imitated Virgil. His lines on the Barometer and the Bowling Green were applauded by hundreds, to whom the "Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris" was as unintelligible as the hieroglyphics on an obelisk.

Purity of style, and an easy flow of numbers, are common to all Addison's Latin poems. Our favorite piece is the "Battle of the Cranes and Pigmies;" for in that piece we discern a gleam of the fancy and humor which many years later enlivened thousands of breakfast tables. Swift boasted that he was never known to steal a hint; and he certainly owed as little to his predecessors as any modern writer. Yet we cannot help suspecting that he borrowed, perhaps unconsciously, one of the happiest touches in his "Voyage to Liliput" from Addison's verses. Let our readers judge.

"The emperor," says Gulliver, "is taller by about the breadth of my nail than any of his court, which alone is enough to strike an awe into the beholders."

About thirty years before Gulliver's Travels appeared, Addison wrote these lines:

*"Jamque acies inter medias sese arduus infert
Pygmeadum ductor, qui, majestate verendus,
Incessuque gravis, reliquos supereminet omnes
Mole gigantea, mediamque exsurgit in ulnam."*

The Latin poems of Addison were greatly and justly admired both at Oxford and Cambridge, before his name had ever been heard by the wits who thronged the coffee-houses round Drury Lane theatre. In his twenty-second year he ventured to appear before the public as a writer of English verse. He addressed some complimentary lines to Dryden, who, after many triumphs and many reverses, had at length reached a secure and lonely eminence among the literary men of that age. Dryden appears to have been much gratified by the young scholar's praise; and an interchange of civilities and good offices followed. Addison was probably introduced by Dryden to Congreve, and was certainly presented by Congreve to Charles Montague, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and leader of the Whig party in the House of Commons.

At this time Addison seemed inclined to devote himself to poetry. He published a translation of part of the fourth "Georgic," "Lines to King William," and other performances of equal value, that is to say, of no value at all. But in those days the public was in the habit of receiving with applause pieces which would now have little chance of obtaining the Newdigate prize or the Seatonian prize. And the reason is obvious. The heroic couplet was then the favorite measure. The art of arranging words in that measure, so that the lines may flow smoothly, that the accents may fall correctly, that the rhymes may strike the ear strongly, and that there may be a pause at the end of every distich, is an art as mechanical as that of mend-

ing a kettle or shoeing a horse, and may be learned by any human being who has sense enough to learn. But, like other mechanical arts, it was gradually improved by means of many experiments and many failures. It was reserved for Pope to discover the trick, to make himself complete master of it, and to teach it to everybody else. From the time when his Pastorals appeared, heroic versification became matter of rule and compass; and before long, all artists were on a level. Hundreds of dunces who never blundered on one happy thought or expression were able to write reams of couplets which, so far as euphony was concerned, could not be distinguished from those of Pope himself, and which very clever writers of the reign of Charles II., Rochester, for example, or Marvel, or Oldham, would have contemplated with admiring despair.

Ben Jonson was a great man, Hoole a very small man. But Hoole, coming after Pope, had learned how to manufacture decasyllable verses, and poured them forth by thousands and tens of thousands, all as well-turned, as smooth, and as like each other as the blocks which have passed through Mr. Brunel's mill in the dockyard at Portsmouth. Ben's heroic couplets resemble blocks rudely hewn out by an unpractised hand with a blunt hatchet. Take as a specimen his translation of a celebrated passage in the *Æneid*:

“ This child our parent earth, stirred up with spite
Of all the gods, brought forth, and as some write,
She was last sister of that giant race
That sought to scale Jove's court, right swift of pace,

And swifter far of wing, a monster vast
 And dreadful. Look, how many plumes are placed
 On her huge corpse, so many waking eyes
 Stick underneath, and, which may stranger rise
 In the report, as many tongues she wears."

Compare with these jagged misshapen distichs the neat fabric which Hoole's machine produces in unlimited abundance. We take the first lines on which we open in his version of Tasso. They are neither better nor worse than the rest :

" O thou, whoe'er thou art, whose steps are led,
 By choice or fate, these lonely shores to tread,
 No greater wonders east or west can boast
 Than yon small island on the pleasing coast.
 If e'er thy sight would blissful scenes explore,
 The current pass, and seek the further shore."

Ever since the time of Pope there has been a glut of lines of this sort, and we are now as little disposed to admire a man for being able to write them, as for being able to write his name. But in the days of William III. such versification was rare; and a rhymer who had any skill in it passed for a great poet, just as in the dark ages a person who could write his name passed for a great clerk. Accordingly, Duke, Stepney, Granville, Walsh, and others, whose only title to fame was that they said in tolerable metre what might have been as well said in prose, or what was not worth saying at all, were honored with marks of distinction which ought to be reserved for genius. With these Addison must have ranked, if he had not earned true and lasting glory

by performances which very little resembled his juvenile poems.

Dryden was now busied with Virgil, and obtained from Addison a critical preface to the *Georgics*. In return for this service, and for other services of the same kind, the veteran poet, in the postscript to the translation of the *Æneid*, complimented his young friend with great liberality, and indeed with more liberality than sincerity. He affected to be afraid that his own performance would not sustain a comparison with the version of the fourth *Georgic*, by "the most ingenious Mr. Addison of Oxford." "After his bees," added Dryden, "my latter swarm is scarcely worth the hiving."

The time had now arrived when it was necessary for Addison to choose a calling. Everything seemed to point his course towards the clerical profession. His habits were regular, his opinions orthodox. His college had large ecclesiastical preferment in its gift, and boasts that it has given at least one bishop to almost every see in England. Dr. Lancelot Addison held an honorable place in the Church, and had set his heart on seeing his son a clergyman. It is clear, from some expressions in the young man's rhymes, that his intention was to take orders. But Charles Montague interfered. Montague had first brought himself into notice by verses, well-timed and not contemptibly written, but never, we think, rising above mediocrity. Fortunately for himself and for his country, he early quitted poetry, in which he could never have attained a rank as high as that of

Dorset or Rochester, and turned his mind to official and parliamentary business. It is written that the ingenious person who undertook to instruct Rasselas, prince of Abyssinia, in the art of flying, ascended an eminence, waved his wings, sprang into the air, and instantly dropped into the lake. But it is added that the wings, which were unable to support him through the sky, bore him up effectually as soon as he was in the water. This is no bad type of the fate of Charles Montague, and of men like him. When he attempted to soar into the regions of poetical invention, he altogether failed; but as soon as he had descended from that ethereal elevation into a lower and grosser element, his talents instantly raised him above the mass. He became a distinguished financier, debater, courtier, and party-leader. He still retained his fondness for the pursuits of his early days; but he showed that fondness not by wearying the public with his own feeble performances, but by discovering and encouraging literary excellence in others. A crowd of wits and poets, who would easily have vanquished him as a competitor, revered him as a judge and a patron. In his plans for the encouragement of learning he was cordially supported by the ablest and most virtuous of his colleagues, Lord Chancellor Somers. Though both these great statesmen had a sincere love of letters, it was not solely from a love of letters that they were desirous to enlist youths of high intellectual qualifications in the public service. The Revolution had altered the whole system of government. Be-

fore that event the press had been controlled by censors, and the Parliament had sat only two months in eight years. Now the press was free, and had begun to exercise unprecedented influence on the public mind. Parliament met annually and sat long. The chief power in the state had passed to the House of Commons. At such a conjuncture, it was natural that literary and oratorical talents should rise in value. There was danger that a government which neglected such talents might be subverted by them. It was, therefore, a profound and enlightened policy which led Montague and Somers to attach such talents to the Whig party by the strongest ties both of interest and of gratitude.

It is remarkable that in a neighboring country we have recently seen similar effects follow from similar causes. The revolution of July, 1830, established representative government in France. The men of letters instantly rose to the highest importance in the state. At the present moment most of the persons whom we see at the head both of the administration and of the opposition, have been professors, historians, journalists, poets. The influence of the literary class in England, during the generation which followed the Revolution, was great, but by no means so great as it has lately been in France. For, in England, the aristocracy of intellect had to contend with a powerful and deeply rooted aristocracy of a very different kind. France had no Somersets and Shrewsburies to keep down her Addisons and Priors.

It was in the year 1699, when Addison had just completed his twenty-seventh year, that the course of his life was finally determined. Both the great chiefs of the ministry were kindly disposed towards him. In political opinions he already was what he continued to be through life, a firm, though a moderate Whig. He had addressed the most polished and vigorous of his early English lines to Somers, and had dedicated to Montague a Latin poem, truly Virgilian both in style and rhythm, on the Peace of Ryswick. The wish of the young poet's great friends was, it should seem, to employ him in the service of the crown abroad. But an intimate knowledge of the French language was a qualification indispensable to a diplomatist; and this qualification Addison had not acquired. It was, therefore, thought desirable that he should pass some time on the Continent in preparing himself for official employment. His own means were not such as would enable him to travel: but a pension of three hundred pounds a year was procured for him by the interest of the Lord Chancellor. It seems to have been apprehended that some difficulty might be started by the rulers of Magdalene College. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer wrote in the strongest terms to Hough. The state — such was the purport of Montague's letter — could not, at that time, spare to the Church such a man as Addison. Too many high civil posts were already occupied by adventurers, who, destitute of every liberal art and sentiment, at once pillaged and disgraced the country which they pretended to serve.

It had become necessary to recruit for the public service from a very different class, from that class of which Addison was the representative. The close of the minister's letter was remarkable. "I am called," he said, "an enemy of the Church. But I will never do it any other injury than keeping Mr. Addison out of it."

This interference was successful; and, in the summer of 1699, Addison, made a rich man by his pension, and still retaining his Fellowship, quitted his beloved Oxford, and set out on his travels. He crossed from Dover to Calais, proceeded to Paris, and was received there with great kindness and politeness by a kinsman of his friend Montague, Charles, Earl of Manchester, who had just been appointed ambassador to the Court of France. The countess, a Whig and a toast, was probably as gracious as her lord; for Addison long retained an agreeable recollection of the impression which she at that time made on him, and, in some lively lines written on the glasses of the Kit Cat Club, described the envy which her cheeks, glowing with the genuine bloom of England, had excited among the painted beauties of Versailles.

Louis XIV. was at this time expiating the vices of his youth by a devotion which had no root in reason; and bore no fruit of charity. The servile literature of France had changed its character to suit the changed character of the prince. No book appeared that had not an air of sanctity. Racine, who was just dead, had passed the close of his

life in writing sacred dramas; and Dacier was seeking for the Athanasian mysteries in Plato. Addison described this state of things in a short but lively and graceful letter to Montague. Another letter, written about the same time to the Lord Chancellor, conveyed the strongest assurances of gratitude and attachment. "The only return I can make to your Lordship," said Addison, "will be to apply myself entirely to my business." With this view he quitted Paris and repaired to Blois, a place where it was supposed that the French language was spoken in its highest purity, and where not a single Englishman could be found. Here he passed some months pleasantly and profitably. Of his way of life at Blois, one of his associates, an abbé named Philippeaux, gave an account to Joseph Spence. If this account is to be trusted, Addison studied much, mused much, talked little, had fits of absence, and either had no love affairs, or was too discreet to confide them to the abbé. A man who, even when surrounded by fellow-countrymen and fellow-students, had always been remarkably shy and silent, was not likely to be loquacious in a foreign tongue, and among foreign companions. But it is clear from Addison's letters, some of which were long after published in the Guardian, that, while he appeared to be absorbed in his own meditations, he was really observing French society with that keen and sly, yet not ill-natured side glance which was peculiarly his own.

From Blois he returned to Paris; and having now

mastered the French language, found great pleasure in the society of French philosophers and poets. He gave an account, in a letter to Bishop Hough, of two highly interesting conversations, one with Malebranche, the other with Boileau. Malebranche expressed great partiality for the English, and extolled the genius of Newton, but shook his head when Hobbes was mentioned, and was indeed so unjust as to call the author of the *Leviathan* a poor, silly creature. Addison's modesty restrained him from fully relating, in his letter, the circumstances of his introduction to Boileau. Boileau, having survived the friends and rivals of his youth, old, deaf, and melancholy, lived in retirement, seldom went either to Court or to the Academy, and was almost inaccessible to strangers. Of the English and of English literature he knew nothing. He had hardly heard the name of Dryden. Some of our countrymen, in the warmth of their patriotism, have asserted that this ignorance must have been affected. We own that we see no ground for such a supposition. English literature was to the French of the age of Louis XIV. what German literature was to our grandfathers. Very few, we suspect, of the accomplished men who, sixty or seventy years ago, used to dine in Leicester Square with Sir Joshua, or at Streatham with Mrs. Thrale, had the slightest notion that Wieland was one of the first wits and poets, and Lessing, beyond all dispute, the first critic in Europe. Boileau knew just as little about the *Paradise Lost*, and about *Absalom* and *Ahitophel*; but he had read Addison's Latin

poems and admired them greatly. They had given him, he said, quite a new notion of the state of learning and taste among the English. Johnson will have it that these praises were insincere. "Nothing," says he, "is better known of Boileau than that he had an injudicious and peevish contempt of modern Latin; and therefore his profession of regard was probably the effect of his civility rather than approbation." Now, nothing is better known of Boileau than that he was singularly sparing of compliments. We do not remember that either friendship or fear ever induced him to bestow praise on any composition which he did not approve. On literary questions, his caustic, disdainful, and self-confident spirit rebelled against that authority to which everything else in France bowed down. He had the spirit to tell Louis XIV. firmly and even rudely, that his Majesty knew nothing about poetry, and admired verses which were detestable. What was there in Addison's position that could induce the satirist, whose stern and fastidious temper had been the dread of two generations, to turn sycophant for the first and last time? Nor was Boileau's contempt of modern Latin either injudicious or peevish. He thought, indeed, that no poem of the first order would ever be written in a dead language. And did he think amiss? Has not the experience of centuries confirmed his opinion? Boileau also thought it probable that, in the best modern Latin, a writer of the Augustan age would have detected ludicrous improprieties. And who can think other-

wise? What modern scholar can honestly declare that he sees the smallest impurity in the style of Livy? Yet is it not certain that, in the style of Livy, Pollio, whose taste had been formed on the banks of the Tiber, detected the inelegant idiom of the Po? Has any modern scholar understood Latin better than Frederic the Great understood French? Yet is it not notorious that Frederic the Great, after reading, speaking, writing French, and nothing but French, during more than half a century, after unlearning his mother-tongue in order to learn French, after living familiarly during many years with French associates, could not, to the last, compose in French, without imminent risk of committing some mistake which would have moved a smile in the literary circles of Paris? Do we believe that Erasmus and Fracastorius wrote Latin as well as Dr. Robertson and Sir Walter Scott wrote English? And are there not in the "Dissertation on India," the last of Dr. Robertson's works, in Waverley, in Marmion, Scotticisms at which a London apprentice would laugh? But does it follow, because we think thus, that we can find nothing to admire in the noble alcaics of Gray, or in the playful elegiacs of Vincent Bourne? Surely not. Nor was Boileau so ignorant or tasteless as to be incapable of appreciating good modern Latin. In the very letter to which Johnson alludes, Boileau says: "Ne croyez pas pourtant que je veuille par là blâmer les vers Latins que vous m'avez envoyés d'un de vos illustres académiciens. Je les ai trouvés fort beaux, et dignes de Vida et de

Sannazar, mais non pas d'Horace et de Virgile." Several poems, in modern Latin, have been praised by Boileau quite as liberally as it was his habit to praise anything. He says, for example, of the Père Fraguier's epigrams, that Catullus seems to have come to life again. But the best proof that Boileau did not feel the undiscerning contempt for modern Latin verses which has been imputed to him is, that he wrote and published Latin verses in several metres. Indeed it happens, curiously enough, that the most severe censure ever pronounced by him on modern Latin is conveyed in Latin hexameters. We allude to the fragment which begins :

“ Quid numeris iterum me balbutire Latinis,
 Longe Alpes citra natum de patre Sicambro,
 Musa, jubes? ”

For these reasons we feel assured that the praise which Boileau bestowed on the *Machinæ Gesticulantes*, and the *Gerano-Pygmæomachia*, was sincere. He certainly opened himself to Addison with a freedom which was a sure indication of esteem. Literature was the chief subject of conversation. The old man talked on his favorite theme much and well, indeed, as his young hearer thought, incomparably well. Boileau had undoubtedly some of the qualities of a great critic. He wanted imagination; but he had strong sense. His literary code was formed on narrow principles; but in applying it, he showed great judgment and penetration. In mere style, abstracted from the ideas of which style is the garb, his taste

was excellent. He was well acquainted with the great Greek writers ; and, though unable fully to appreciate their creative genius, admired the majestic simplicity of their manner, and had learned from them to despise bombast and tinsel. It is easy, we think, to discover, in the "Spectator" and the "Guardian," traces of the influence, in part salutary and in part pernicious, which the mind of Boileau had on the mind of Addison.

While Addison was at Paris, an event took place which made that capital a disagreeable residence for an Englishman and a Whig. Charles, second of the name, king of Spain, died ; and bequeathed his dominions to Philip, Duke of Anjou, a younger son of the Dauphin. The king of France, in direct violation of his engagements both with Great Britain and with the States-General, accepted the bequest on behalf of his grandson. The House of Bourbon was at the summit of human grandeur. England had been outwitted, and found herself in a situation at once degrading and perilous. The people of France, not presaging the calamities by which they were destined to expiate the perfidy of their sovereign, went mad with pride and delight. Every man looked as if a great estate had just been left him. "The French conversation," said Addison, "begins to grow insupportable ; that which was before the vainest nation in the world, is now worse than ever." Sick of the arrogant exultation of the Parisians, and probably foreseeing that the peace between France and England could not be of long duration, he set off for Italy.

In December, 1700,* he embarked at Marseilles. As he glided along the Ligurian coast, he was delighted by the sight of myrtles and olive-trees, which retained their verdure under the winter solstice. Soon, however, he encountered one of the black storms of the Mediterranean. The captain of the ship gave up all for lost, and confessed himself to a capuchin who happened to be on board. The English heretic, in the meantime, fortified himself against the terrors of death with devotions of a very different kind. How strong an impression this perilous voyage made on him, appears from the ode, "How are thy servants blest, O Lord!" which was long after published in the "Spectator." After some days of discomfort and danger, Addison was glad to land at Savona, and to make his way, over mountains where no road had yet been hewn out by art, to the city of Genoa.

At Genoa, still ruled by her own Doge, and by the nobles whose names were inscribed on her Book of Gold, Addison made a short stay. He admired the narrow streets overhung by long lines of towering palaces, the walls rich with frescos, the gorgeous temple of the Annunciation, and the tapestries whereon were recorded the long glories of the house of Doria. Thence he hastened to Milan, where he

* It is strange that Addison should, in the first line of his travels, have misdated his departure from Marseilles by a whole year, and still more strange that this slip of the pen, which throws the whole narrative into inextricable confusion, should have been repeated in a succession of editions, and never detected by Tickell or by Hurd.

contemplated the Gothic magnificence of the cathedral with more wonder than pleasure. He passed Lake Benacus while a gale was blowing, and saw the waves raging as they raged when Virgil looked upon them. At Venice, then the gayest spot in Europe, the traveller spent the Carnival, the gayest season of the year, in the midst of masques, dances, and serenades. Here he was at once diverted and provoked by the absurd dramatic pieces which then disgraced the Italian stage. To one of those pieces, however, he was indebted for a valuable hint. He was present when a ridiculous play on the death of Cato was performed. Cato, it seems, was in love with a daughter of Scipio. The lady had given her heart to Cæsar. The rejected lover determined to destroy himself. He appeared seated in his library, a dagger in his hand, a Plutarch and a Tasso before him; and in this position he pronounced a soliloquy before he struck the blow. We are surprised that so remarkable a circumstance as this should have escaped the notice of all Addison's biographers. There cannot, we conceive, be the smallest doubt that this scene, in spite of its absurdities and anachronisms, struck the traveller's imagination, and suggested to him the thought of bringing Cato on the English stage. It is well known that about this time he began his tragedy, and that he finished the first four acts before he returned to England.

On his way from Venice to Rome he was drawn some miles out of the beaten road by a wish to see the smallest independent state in Europe. On a rock

where the snow still lay, though the Italian spring was now far advanced, was perched the little fortress of San Marino. The road which led to the secluded town were so bad that few travellers had ever visited it, and none had ever published an account of it. Addison could not suppress a good-natured smile at the simple manners and institutions of this singular community. But he observed, with the exultation of a Whig, that the rude mountain tract which formed the territory of the republic swarmed with an honest, healthy, and contented peasantry, while the rich plain which surrounded the metropolis of civil and spiritual tyranny was scarcely less desolate than the uncleared wilds of America.

At Rome Addison remained on his first visit only long enough to catch a glimpse of St. Peter's and of the Pantheon. His haste is the more extraordinary because the Holy Week was close at hand. He has given no hint which can enable us to pronounce why he chose to fly from a spectacle which every year allures from distant regions persons of far less taste and sensibility than his. Possibly, travelling, as he did, at the charge of a government distinguished by its enmity to the Church of Rome, he may have thought that it would be imprudent in him to assist at the most magnificent rite of that Church. Many eyes would be upon him; and he might find it difficult to behave in such a manner as to give offence neither to his patrons in England, nor to those among whom he resided. Whatever his motives may have been, he turned his back on the most august and

affecting ceremony which is known among men, and posted along the Appian Way to Naples.

Naples was then destitute of what are now, perhaps, its chief attractions. The lovely bay and the awful mountain were indeed there. But a farmhouse stood on the theatre of Herculaneum, and rows of vines grew over the streets of Pompeii. The temples of Pæstum had not indeed been hidden from the eye of man by any great convulsion of nature; but, strange to say, their existence was a secret even to artists and antiquaries. Though situated within a few hours' journey of a great capital, where Salvator had not long before painted, and where Vico was then lecturing, those noble remains were as little known to Europe as the ruined cities overgrown by the forests of Yucatan. What was to be seen at Naples, Addison saw. He climbed Vesuvius, explored the tunnel of Posilipo, and wandered among the vines and almond-trees of Capreæ. But neither the wonders of nature, nor those of art, could so occupy his attention as to prevent him from noticing, though cursorily, the abuses of the government and the misery of the people. The great kingdom which had just descended to Philip V., was in a state of paralytic dotage. Even Castile and Aragon were sunk in wretchedness. Yet, compared with the Italian dependencies of the Spanish crown, Castile and Aragon might be called prosperous. It is clear that all the observations which Addison made in Italy tended to confirm him in the political opinions which he had adopted at home. To the last, he

always spoke of foreign travel as the best cure for Jacobitism. In his "Freeholder," the Troy fox-hunter asks what travelling is good for, except to teach a man to jabber French, and to talk against passive obedience.

From Naples, Addison returned to Rome by sea, along the coast which his favorite Virgil had celebrated. The felucca passed the headland where the oar and trumpet were placed by the Trojan adventurers on the tomb of Misenus, and anchored at night under the shelter of the fabled promontory of Circe. The voyage ended in the Tiber, still overhung with dark verdure, and still turbid with yellow sand, as when it met the eyes of Æneas. From the ruined port of Ostia the stranger hurried to Rome; and at Rome he remained during those hot and sickly months when, even in the Augustan age, all who could make their escape fled from mad dogs and from streets black with funerals, to gather the first figs of the season in the country. It is probable that, when he, long after, poured forth in verse his gratitude to the Providence which had enabled him to breathe unhurt in tainted air, he was thinking of the August and September which he passed at Rome.

It was not till the latter end of October that he tore himself away from the masterpieces of ancient and modern art which are collected in the city so long the mistress of the world. He then journeyed northward, passed through Sienna, and for a moment forgot his prejudices in favor of classic architecture as he looked on the magnificent cathedral. At Flor-

ence he spent some days with the Duke of Shrewsbury, who, cloyed with the pleasures of ambition, and impatient of its pains, fearing both parties and loving neither, had determined to hide in an Italian retreat talents and accomplishments which, if they had been united with fixed principles and civil courage, might have made him the foremost man of his age. These days, we are told, passed pleasantly; and we can easily believe it. For Addison was a delightful companion when he was at his ease; and the Duke, though he seldom forgot that he was a Talbot, had the invaluable art of putting at ease all who came near him.

Addison gave some time to Florence, and especially to the sculptures in the Museum, which he preferred even to those of the Vatican. He then pursued his journey through a country in which the ravages of the last war were still discernible, and in which all men were looking forward with a dread to a still fiercer conflict. Eugene had already descended from the Rhætian Alps, to dispute with Catinat the rich plain of Lombardy. The faithless ruler of Savoy was still reckoned among the allies of Louis. England had not yet actually declared war against France: but Manchester had left Paris; and the negotiations which produced the Grand Alliance against the House of Bourbon were in progress. Under such circumstances, it was desirable for an English traveller to reach neutral ground without delay. Addison resolved to cross Mont Cenis. It was December; and the road was very different

from that which now reminds the stranger of the power and genius of Napoleon. The winter, however, was mild; and the passage was, for those times, easy. To this journey Addison alluded, when, in the ode which we have already quoted, he said that for him the Divine goodness had warmed the hoary Alpine hills.

It was in the midst of the eternal snow that he composed his Epistle to his friend Montague, now Lord Halifax. That Epistle, once widely renowned, is now known only to curious readers, and will hardly be considered by those to whom it is known as in any perceptible degree heightening Addison's fame. It is, however, decidedly superior to any English composition which he had previously published. Nay, we think it quite as good as any poem in heroic metre which appeared during the interval between the death of Dryden and the publication of the Essay on Criticism. It contains passages as good as the second-rate passages of Pope, and would have added to the reputation of Parnell or Prior.

But, whatever be the literary merits or defects of the Epistle, it undoubtedly does honor to the principles and spirit of the author. Halifax had now nothing to give. He had fallen from power, had been held up to obloquy, had been impeached by the House of Commons, and though his peers had dismissed the impeachment, had, as it seemed, little chance of ever again filling high office. The Epistle, written at such a time, is one among many proofs that there was no mixture of cowardice or meanness

in the suavity and moderation which distinguished Addison from all the other public men of those stormy times.

At Geneva, the traveller learned that a partial change of ministry had taken place in England, and that the Earl of Manchester had become Secretary of State. Manchester exerted himself to serve his young friend. It was thought advisable that an English agent should be near the person of Eugene in Italy; and Addison, whose diplomatic education was now finished, was the man selected. He was preparing to enter on his honorable functions, when all his prospects were for a time darkened by the death of William III.

Anne had long felt a strong aversion, personal, political, and religious, to the Whig party. That aversion appeared in the first measures of her reign. Manchester was deprived of the seals, after he had held them only a few weeks. Neither Somers nor Halifax was sworn of the Privy Council. Addison shared the fate of his three patrons. His hopes of employment in the public service were at an end; his pension was stopped; and it was necessary for him to support himself by his own exertions. He became tutor to a young English traveller, and appears to have rambled with his pupil over great part of Switzerland and Germany. At this time he wrote his pleasing treatise on Medals. It was not published till after his death; but several distinguished scholars saw the manuscript, and gave just praise to the grace of the style, and to the learning and ingenuity evinced by the quotations.

From Germany Addison repaired to Holland, where he learned the melancholy news of his father's death. After passing some months in the United Provinces, he returned about the close of the year 1703 to England. He was there cordially received by his friends, and introduced by them into the Kit-Cat Club, a society in which were collected all the various talents and accomplishments which then gave lustre to the Whig party.

Addison was, during some months after his return from the Continent, hard pressed by pecuniary difficulties. But it was soon in the power of his noble patrons to serve him effectually. A political change, silent and gradual, but of the highest importance, was in daily progress. The accession of Anne had been hailed by the Tories with transports of joy and hope; and for a time it seemed as if the Whigs had fallen never to rise again. The throne was surrounded by men supposed to be attached to the prerogative and to the Church; and among these none stood so high in the favor of the sovereign as the Lord Treasurer Godolphin and the Captain-General Marlborough.

The country gentlemen and country clergymen had fully expected that the policy of these ministers would be directly opposed to that which had been almost constantly followed by William; that the landed interest would be favored at the expense of trade; that no addition would be made to the funded debt; that the privileges conceded to dissenters by the late king would be curtailed, if not withdrawn;

that the war with France, if there must be such a war, would, on our part, be almost entirely naval; and that the government would avoid close connections with foreign powers, and, above all, with Holland.

But the country gentlemen and country clergymen were fated to be deceived, not for the last time. The prejudices and passions which raged without control in vicarages, in cathedral closes, and in the manor-houses of fox-hunting squires, were not shared by the chiefs of the ministry. Those statesmen saw that it was both for the public interest, and for their own interest, to adopt a Whig policy, at least as respected the alliances of the country and the conduct of the war. But, if the foreign policy of the Whigs were adopted, it was impossible to abstain from adopting also their financial policy. The natural consequences followed. The rigid Tories were alienated from the government. The votes of the Whigs became necessary to it. The votes of the Whigs could be secured only by further concessions; and further concessions the queen was induced to make.

At the beginning of the year 1704, the state of parties bore a close analogy to the state of parties in 1826. In 1826, as in 1704, there was a Tory ministry divided into two hostile sections. The position of Mr. Canning and his friends in 1826 corresponded to that which Marlborough and Godolphin occupied in 1704. Nottingham and Jersey were, in 1704, what Lord Eldon and Lord Westmoreland were in 1826.

The Whigs of 1704 were in a situation resembling that in which the Whigs of 1826 stood. In 1704, Somers, Halifax, Sunderland, Cowper, were not in office. There was no avowed coalition between them and the moderate Tories. It is probable that no direct communication tending to such a coalition had yet taken place; yet all men saw that such a coalition was inevitable, nay, that it was already half formed. Such, or nearly such, was the state of things when tidings arrived of the great battle fought at Blenheim on the 13th of August, 1704. By the Whigs the news was hailed with transports of joy and pride. No fault, no cause of quarrel, could be remembered by them against the commander whose genius had, in one day, changed the face of Europe, saved the Imperial throne, humbled the House of Bourbon, and secured the Act of Settlement against foreign hostility. The feeling of the Tories was very different. They could not indeed, without imprudence, openly express regret at an event so glorious to their country; but their congratulations were so cold and sullen as to give deep disgust to the victorious general and his friends.

Godolphin was not a reading man. Whatever time he could spare from business, he was in the habit of spending at Newmarket or at the card-table. But he was not absolutely indifferent to poetry; and he was too intelligent an observer not to perceive that literature was a formidable engine of political warfare, and that the great Whig leaders had strengthened their party, and raised their character, by extending a

liberal and judicious patronage to good writers. He was mortified, and not without reason, by the exceeding badness of the poems which appeared in honor of the battle of Blenheim. One of these poems has been rescued from oblivion by the exquisite absurdity of three lines.

“Think of two thousand gentlemen at least,
And each man mounted on his capering beast;
Into the Danube they were pushed by shoals.”

Where to procure better verses the Treasurer did not know. He understood how to negotiate a loan, or remit a subsidy; he was also well versed in the history of running horses and fighting-cocks; but his acquaintance among the poets was very small. He consulted Halifax; but Halifax affected to decline the office of adviser. He had, he said, done his best, when he had power, to encourage men whose abilities and acquirements might do honor to their country. Those times were over. Other maxims had prevailed. Merit was suffered to pine in obscurity; and the public money was squandered on the undeserving. “I do know,” he added, “a gentleman who would celebrate the battle in a manner worthy of the subject; but I will not name him.” Godolphin, who was expert at the soft answer which turneth away wrath, and who was under the necessity of paying court to the Whigs, gently replied that there was too much ground for Halifax’s complaints, but that what was amiss should in time be rectified, and that in the meantime the services of a man such as Halifax had described should be liberally rewarded. Halifax

then mentioned Addison, but, mindful of the dignity as well as of the pecuniary interest of his friend, insisted that the minister should apply in the most courteous manner to Addison himself; and this Godolphin promised to do.

Addison then occupied a garret up three pair of stairs, over a small shop in the Haymarket. In this humble lodging he was surprised, on the morning which followed the conversation between Godolphin and Halifax, by a visit from no less a person than the Right Honorable Henry Boyle, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and afterwards Lord Carleton. This high-born minister had been sent by the Lord Treasurer as ambassador to the needy poet. Addison readily undertook the proposed task, a task which, to so good a Whig, was probably a pleasure. When the poem was little more than half finished, he showed it to Godolphin, who was delighted with it, and particularly with the famous similitude of the Angel. Addison was instantly appointed to a commissionership worth about two hundred pounds a year, and was assured that this appointment was only an earnest of greater favors.

The "Campaign" came forth, and was as much admired by the public as by the minister. It pleases us less, on the whole, than the Epistle to Halifax. Yet it undoubtedly ranks high among the poems which appeared during the interval between the death of Dryden and the dawn of Pope's genius. The chief merit of the "Campaign," we think, is that which was noticed by Johnson, the manly and ra-

tional rejection of fiction. The first great poet whose works have come down to us sang of war long before war became a science or a trade. If, in his time, there was enmity between two little Greek towns, each poured forth its crowd of citizens, ignorant of discipline, and armed with implements of labor rudely turned into weapons. On each side appeared conspicuous a few chiefs, whose wealth had enabled them to procure good armor, horses, and chariots, and whose leisure had enabled them to practise military exercises. One such chief, if he were a man of great strength, agility, and courage, would probably be more formidable than twenty common men; and the force and dexterity with which he flung his spear might have no inconsiderable share in deciding the event of the day. Such were probably the battles with which Homer was familiar. But Homer related the actions of men of a former generation, of men who sprang from the gods, and communed with the gods face to face, of men, one of whom could with ease hurl rocks which two sturdy hinds of a later period would be unable to lift. He therefore naturally represented their martial exploits as resembling in kind, but far surpassing in magnitude, those of the stoutest and most expert combatants of his own age. Achilles, clad in celestial armor, drawn by celestial coursers, grasping the spear which none but himself could raise, driving all Troy and Lycia before him, and choking Scamander dead, was only a magnificent exaggeration of the real hero, who, strong, fearless, accustomed to

the use of weapons, guarded by a shield and helmet of the best Sidonian fabric, and whirled along by horses of Thessalian breed, struck down with his own right arm foe after foe. In all rude societies similar notions are found. There are at this day countries where the Lifeguardsman Shaw would be considered as a much greater warrior than the Duke of Wellington. Buonaparte loved to describe the astonishment with which the Mamelukes looked at his diminutive figure. Mourad Bey, distinguished above all his fellows by his bodily strength, and by the skill with which he managed his horse and his sabre, could not believe that a man who was scarcely five feet high, and rode like a butcher, could be the greatest soldier in Europe.

Homer's descriptions of war had therefore as much truth as poetry requires. But truth was altogether wanting to the performances of those who, writing about battles which had scarcely anything in common with the battles of his times, servilely imitated his manner. The folly of Silius Italicus, in particular, is positively nauseous. He undertook to record in verse the vicissitudes of a great struggle between generals of the first order; and his narrative is made up of the hideous wounds which these generals inflicted with their own hands. Asdrubal flings a spear which grazes the shoulder of the consul Nero: but Nero sends his spear into Asdrubal's side. Fabius slays Thuris and Butes and Maris and Arses, and the long-haired Adherbes, and the gigantic Thylis, and Sapharus and Monæsus, and the trumpeter Morinus.

Hannibal runs Perusinus through the groin with a stake, and breaks the backbone of Telesinus with a huge stone. This detestable fashion was copied in modern times, and continued to prevail down to the age of Addison. Several versifiers had described William turning thousands to flight by his single prowess, and dyeing the Boyne with Irish blood. Nay, so estimable a writer as John Philips, the author of the "Splendid Shilling," represented Marlborough as having won the battle of Blenheim merely by strength of muscle and skill in fence. The following lines may serve as an example :

" Churchill, viewing where
 The violence of Tallard most prevailed,
 Came to oppose his slaughtering arm. With speed
 Precipitate he rode, urging his way
 O'er hill of gasping heroes, and fallen steeds
 Rolling in death. Destruction, grim with blood,
 Attends his furious course. Around his head
 The glowing balls play innocent, while he
 With dire impetuous sway deals fatal blows
 Among the flying Gauls. In Gallic blood
 He dyes his reeking sword, and strews the ground
 With headless ranks. What can they do? Or how
 Withstand his wide-destroying sword?"

Addison, with excellent sense and taste, departed from this ridiculous fashion. He reserved his praise for the qualities which made Marlborough truly great: energy, sagacity, military science. But, above all, the poet extolled the firmness of that mind which, in the midst of confusion, uproar, and slaughter, ex-

aminéd and disposed everything with the serene wisdom of a higher intelligence.

Here it was that he introduced the famous comparison of Marlborough to an angel guiding the whirlwind. We will not dispute the general justice of Johnson's remarks on this passage. But we must point out one circumstance which appears to have escaped all the critics. The extraordinary effect which this simile produced when it first appeared, and which to the following generation seemed inexplicable, is doubtless to be chiefly attributed to a line which most readers now regard as a feeble parenthesis, —

“Such as, of late, o'er pale Britannia passed.”

Addison spoke, not of a storm, but of the storm. The great tempest of November, 1703, the only tempest which in our latitude has equalled the rage of a tropical hurricane, had left a dreadful recollection in the minds of all men. No other tempest was ever in this country the occasion of a parliamentary address or of a public fast. Whole fleets had been cast away. Large mansions had been blown down. One prelate had been buried beneath the ruins of his palace. London and Bristol had presented the appearance of cities just sacked. Hundreds of families were still in mourning. The prostrate trunks of large trees, and the ruins of houses, still attested, in all the southern counties, the fury of the blast. The popularity which the simile of the angel enjoyed among Addison's contemporaries has always seemed to us

to be a remarkable instance of the advantage which, in rhetoric and poetry, the particular has over the general.

Soon after the Campaign, was published Addison's Narrative of his Travels in Italy. The first effect produced by this narrative was disappointment. The crowd of readers who expected politics and scandal, speculations on the projects of Victor Amadeus, and anecdotes about the jollities of convents and the amours of cardinals and nuns, were confounded by finding that the writer's mind was much more occupied by the war between the Trojans and Rutulians than by the war between France and Austria; and that he seemed to have heard no scandal of later date than the gallantries of the Empress Faustina. In time, however, the judgment of the many was overruled by that of the few; and, before the book was reprinted, it was so eagerly sought that it sold for five times the original price. It is still read with pleasure: the style is pure and flowing; the classical quotations and allusions are numerous and happy; and we are now and then charmed by that singularly humane and delicate humor in which Addison excelled all men. Yet this agreeable work, even when considered merely as the history of a literary tour, may justly be censured on account of its faults of omission. We have already said that, though rich in extracts from the Latin poets, it contains scarcely any references to the Latin orators and historians. We must add, that it contains little, or rather no information, respecting the history and literature of

modern Italy. To the best of our remembrance, Addison does not mention Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Boiardo, Berni, Lorenzo de' Medici, or Machiavelli. He coldly tells us that at Ferrara he saw the tomb of Ariosto, and that at Venice he heard the gondoliers sing verses of Tasso. But for Tasso and Ariosto he cared far less than for Valerius Flaccus and Silius Apollinaris. The gentle flow of the Ticin brings a line of Silius to his mind. The sulphurous stream of Albula suggests to him several passages of Martial. But he has not a word to say of the illustrious dead of Santa Croce; he crosses the wood of Ravenna without recollecting the Spectre Huntsman, and wanders up and down Rimini without one thought of Francesca. At Paris he had eagerly sought an introduction to Boileau; but he seems not to have been at all aware that at Florence he was in the vicinity of a poet with whom Boileau could not sustain a comparison, of the greatest lyric poet of modern times, Vincenzo Filicaja. This is the more remarkable, because Filicaja was the favorite poet of the accomplished Somers, under whose protection Addison travelled, and to whom the account of the Travels is dedicated. The truth is, that Addison knew little, and cared less, about the literature of modern Italy. His favorite models were Latin. His favorite critics were French. Half the Tuscan poetry that he had read seemed to him monstrous, and the other half tawdry.

His "Travels" were followed by the lively opera of "Rosamond." This piece was ill set to music, and

therefore failed on the stage, but it completely succeeded in print, and is indeed excellent in its kind. The smoothness with which the verses glide, and the elasticity with which they bound, is, to our ears at least, very pleasing. We are inclined to think that if Addison had left heroic couplets to Pope, and blank verse to Rowe, and had employed himself in writing airy and spirited songs, his reputation as a poet would have stood far higher than it now does. Some years after his death, "Rosamond" was set to new music by Doctor Arne; and was performed with complete success. Several passages long retained their popularity, and were daily sung, during the latter part of George II.'s reign, at all the harpsichords in England.

While Addison thus amused himself, his prospects, and the prospects of his party, were constantly becoming brighter and brighter. In the spring of 1705 the ministers were freed from the restraint imposed by a House of Commons in which Tories of the most perverse class had the ascendancy. The elections were favorable to the Whigs. The coalition which had been tacitly and gradually formed was now openly avowed. The Great Seal was given to Cowper. Somers and Halifax were sworn of the Council. Halifax was sent in the following year to carry the decorations of the order of the garter to the electoral prince of Hanover, and was accompanied on this honorable mission by Addison, who had just been made Undersecretary of State. The Secretary of State under whom Addison first served

was Sir Charles Hedges, a Tory. But Hedges was soon dismissed to make room for the most vehement of Whigs, Charles, Earl of Sunderland. In every department of the state, indeed, the High-Churchmen were compelled to give place to their opponents. At the close of 1707, the Tories who still remained in office strove to rally, with Harley at their head. But the attempt, though favored by the Queen, who had always been a Tory at heart, and who had now quarrelled with the Duchess of Marlborough, was unsuccessful. The time was not yet. The Captain-General was at the height of popularity and glory. The Low-Church party had a majority in Parliament. The country squires and rectors, though occasionally uttering a savage growl, were for the most part in a state of torpor, which lasted till they were roused into activity, and indeed into madness, by the prosecution of Sacheverell. Harley and his adherents were compelled to retire. The victory of the Whigs was complete. At the general election of 1708, their strength in the House of Commons became irresistible; and before the end of that year, Somers was made Lord President of the Council, and Wharton Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Addison sat for Malmsbury in the House of Commons which was elected in 1708. But the House of Commons was not the field for him. The bashfulness of his nature made his wit and eloquence useless in debate. He once rose, but could not overcome his diffidence, and ever after remained silent. Nobody can think it strange that a great writer should fail

as a speaker. But many, probably, will think it strange that Addison's failure as a speaker should have had no unfavorable effect on his success as a politician. In our time, a man of high rank and great fortune might, though speaking very little and very ill, hold a considerable post. But it would now be inconceivable that a mere adventurer, a man who, when out of office, must live by his pen, should in a few years become successively Undersecretary of State, Chief Secretary for Ireland, and Secretary of State, without some oratorical talent. Addison, without high birth, and with little property, rose to a post which dukes, the heads of the great houses of Talbot, Russell, and Bentinck, have thought it an honor to fill. Without opening his lips in debate, he rose to a post, the highest that Chatham or Fox ever reached. And this he did before he had been nine years in Parliament. We must look for the explanation of this seeming miracle to the peculiar circumstances in which that generation was placed.

During the interval which elapsed between the time when the censorship of the press ceased, and the time when parliamentary proceedings began to be freely reported, literary talents were, to a public man, of much more importance, and oratorical talents of much less importance, than in our time. At présent, the best way of giving rapid and wide publicity to a fact or an argument is to introduce that fact or argument into a speech made in Parliament. If a political tract were to appear superior to the "Conduct of the Allies," or to the best numbers of the

“Freeholder,” the circulation of such a tract would be languid indeed when compared with the circulation of every remarkable word uttered in the deliberations of the legislature. A speech made in the House of Commons at four in the morning is on thirty thousand tables before ten. A speech made on the Monday is read on the Wednesday by multitudes in Antrim and Aberdeenshire. The orator, by the help of the short-hand writer, has to a great extent superseded the pamphleteer. It was not so in the reign of Anne. The best speech could then produce no effect except on those who heard it. It was only by means of the press that the opinion of the public without doors could be influenced; and the opinion of the public without doors could not but be of the highest importance in a country governed by parliaments, and indeed at that time governed by triennial parliaments. The pen was therefore a more formidable political engine than the tongue. Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox contended only in Parliament. But Walpole and Pulteney, the Pitt and Fox of an earlier period, had not done half of what was necessary, when they sat down amid the acclamations of the House of Commons. They had still to plead their cause before the country, and this they could only do by means of the press. Their works are now forgotten. But it is certain that there were in Grub Street few more assiduous scribblers of Thoughts, Letters, Answers, Remarks, than these two great chiefs of parties. Pulteney, when leader of the Opposition, and possessed of thirty thousand a year, edited the “Craftsman.”

Walpole, though not a man of literary habits, was the author of at least ten pamphlets, and retouched and corrected many more. These facts sufficiently show of how great importance literary assistance then was to the contending parties. St. John was, certainly, in Anne's reign, the best Tory speaker; Cowper was probably the best Whig speaker. But it may well be doubted whether St. John did so much for the Tories as Swift, and whether Cowper did so much for the Whigs as Addison. When these things are duly considered, it will not be thought strange that Addison should have climbed higher in the state than any other Englishman has ever, by means merely of literary talents, been able to climb. Swift would, in all probability, have climbed as high, if he had not been encumbered by his cassock and his pudding sleeves. As far as the homage of the great went, Swift had as much of it as if he had been Lord Treasurer.

To the influence which Addison derived from his literary talents was added all the influence which arises from character. The world, always ready to think the worst of needy political adventurers, was forced to make one exception. Restlessness, violence, audacity, laxity of principle, are the vices ordinarily attributed to that class of men. But faction itself could not deny that Addison had, through all changes of fortune, been strictly faithful to his early opinions, and to his early friends; that his integrity was without stain; that his whole deportment indicated a fine sense of the becoming; that, in the utmost heat of

controversy, his zeal was tempered by a regard for truth, humanity, and social decorum; that no outrage could ever provoke him to retaliation unworthy of a Christian and a gentleman; and that his only faults were a too sensitive delicacy, and a modesty which amounted to bashfulness.

He was undoubtedly one of the most popular men of his time; and much of his popularity he owed, we believe, to that very timidity which his friends lamented. That timidity often prevented him from exhibiting his talents to the best advantage. But it propitiated Nemesis. It averted that envy which would otherwise have been excited by fame so splendid, and by so rapid an elevation. No man is so great a favorite with the public as he who is at once an object of admiration, of respect, and of pity; and such were the feelings which Addison inspired. Those who enjoyed the privilege of hearing his familiar conversation, declared with one voice that it was superior even to his writings. The brilliant Mary Montague said that she had known all the wits, and that Addison was the best company in the world. The malignant Pope was forced to own that there was a charm in Addison's talk which could be found nowhere else. Swift, when burning with animosity against the Whigs, could not but confess to Stella that, after all, he had never known any associate so agreeable as Addison. Steele, an excellent judge of lively conversation, said, that the conversation of Addison was at once the most polite, and the most mirthful, that could be imagined; that it was Te-

rence and Catullus in one, heightened by an exquisite something which was neither Terence nor Catullus, but Addison alone. Young, an excellent judge of serious conversation, said, that when Addison was at his ease, he went on in a noble strain of thought and language, so as to chain the attention of every hearer. Nor were Addison's great colloquial powers more admirable than the courtesy and softness of heart which appeared in his conversation. At the same time, it would be too much to say that he was wholly devoid of the malice which is, perhaps, inseparable from a keen sense of the ludicrous. He had one habit which both Swift and Stella applauded, and which we hardly know how to blame. If his first attempts to set a presuming dunce right were ill received, he changed his tone, "assented with civil leer," and lured the flattered coxcomb deeper and deeper into absurdity. That such was his practice we should, we think, have guessed from his works. The Tatler's criticisms on Mr. Softly's sonnet, and the Spectator's dialogue with the politician who is so zealous for the honor of Lady Q-p-t-s, are excellent specimens of this innocent mischief.

Such were Addison's talents for conversation. But his rare gifts were not exhibited to crowds or to strangers. As soon as he entered a large company, as soon as he saw an unknown face, his lips were sealed, and his manners became constrained. None who met him only in great assemblies would have been able to believe that he was the same man who had often kept a few friends listening and laughing

round a table, from the time when the play ended till the clock of St. Paul's in Covent Garden struck four. Yet, even at such a table, he was not seen to the best advantage. To enjoy his conversation in the highest perfection, it was necessary to be alone with him, and to hear him, in his own phrase, think aloud. "There is no such thing," he used to say, "as real conversation, but between two persons."

This timidity, a timidity surely neither ungraceful nor unamiable, led Addison into the two most serious faults which can with justice be imputed to him. He found that wine broke the spell which lay on his fine intellect, and was therefore too easily seduced into convivial excess. Such excess was in that age regarded, even by grave men, as the most venial of all peccadilloes, and was so far from being a mark of ill-breeding, that it was almost essential to the character of a fine gentleman. But the smallest speck is seen on a white ground; and almost all the biographers of Addison have said something about this failing. Of any other statesman or writer of Queen Anne's reign, we should no more think of saying that he sometimes took too much wine, than that he wore a long wig and a sword.

To the excessive modesty of Addison's nature we must ascribe another fault which generally arises from a very different cause. He became a little too fond of seeing himself surrounded by a small circle of admirers, to whom he was as a king, or rather as a god. All these men were far inferior to him in ability, and some of them had very serious faults.

Nor did those faults escape his observation; for, if ever there was an eye which saw through and through men, it was the eye of Addison. But with the keenest observation, and the finest sense of the ridiculous, he had a large charity. The feeling with which he looked on most of his humble companions was one of benevolence, slightly tinged with contempt. He was at perfect ease in their company; he was grateful for their devoted attachment, and he loaded them with benefits. Their veneration for him appears to have exceeded that with which Johnson was regarded by Boswell, or Warburton by Hurd. It was not in the power of adulation to turn such a head, or deprave such a heart, as Addison's. But it must in candor be admitted that he contracted some of the faults which can scarcely be avoided by any person who is so unfortunate as to be the oracle of a small literary coterie.

One member of this little society was Eustace Budgell, a young Templar of some literature, and a distant relation of Addison. There was at this time no stain on the character of Budgell, and it is not improbable that his career would have been prosperous and honorable, if the life of his cousin had been prolonged. But when the master was laid in the grave, the disciple broke loose from all restraint, descended rapidly from one degree of vice and misery to another, ruined his fortune by follies, attempted to repair it by crimes, and at length closed a wicked and unhappy life by self-murder. Yet, to the last, the wretched man, gambler, lampooner, cheat, forger, as

he was, retained his affection and veneration for Addison, and recorded those feelings in the last lines which he traced before he hid himself from infamy under London Bridge.

Another of Addison's favorite companions was Ambrose Phillipps, a good Whig and a middling poet, who had the honor of bringing into fashion a species of composition which has been called after his name, Namby Pamby. But the most remarkable members of the little senate, as Pope long afterwards called it, were Richard Steele and Thomas Tickell.

Steele had known Addison from childhood. They had been together at the Charter House and at Oxford; but circumstances had then, for a time, separated them widely. Steele had left college without taking a degree, had been disinherited by a rich relation, had led a vagrant life, had served in the army, had tried to find the philosopher's stone, and had written a religious treatise and several comedies. He was one of those people whom it is impossible either to hate or to respect. His temper was sweet, his affections warm, his spirits lively, his passions strong, and his principles weak. His life was spent in sinning and repenting; in inculcating what was right, and doing what was wrong. In speculation, he was a man of piety and honor; in practice he was much of the rake and a little of the swindler. He was, however, so good-natured that it was not easy to be seriously angry with him, and that even rigid moralists felt more inclined to pity than to blame him, when he dived himself into a spunging

house or drank himself into a fever. Addison regarded Steele with kindness not unmingled with scorn, tried, with little success, to keep him out of scrapes, introduced him to the great, procured a good place for him, corrected his plays, and, though by no means rich, lent him large sums of money. One of these loans appears, from a letter dated in August, 1708, to have amounted to a thousand pounds. These pecuniary transactions probably led to frequent bickerings. It is said that, on one occasion, Steele's negligence, or dishonesty, provoked Addison to repay himself by the help of a bailiff. We cannot join with Miss Aikin in rejecting this story. Johnson heard it from Savage, who heard it from Steele. Few private transactions which took place a hundred and twenty years ago, are proved by stronger evidence than this. But we can by no means agree with those who condemn Addison's severity. The most amiable of mankind may well be moved to indignation, when what he has earned hardly, and lent with great inconvenience to himself, for the purpose of relieving a friend in distress, is squandered with insane profusion. We will illustrate our meaning by an example which is not the less striking because it is taken from fiction. Dr. Harrison, in Fielding's *Amelia*, is represented as the most benevolent of human beings; yet he takes in execution, not only the goods, but the person of his friend Booth. Dr. Harrison resorts to this strong measure because he has been informed that Booth, while pleading poverty as an excuse for not paying

just debts, has been buying fine jewelry, and setting up a coach. No person who is well acquainted with Steele's life and correspondence can doubt that he behaved quite as ill to Addison as Booth was accused of behaving to Dr. Harrison. The real history, we have little doubt, was something like this: A letter comes to Addison, imploring help in pathetic terms, and promising reformation and speedy repayment. Poor Dick declares that he has not an inch of candle, or a bushel of coals, or credit with the butcher for a shoulder of mutton. Addison is moved. He determines to deny himself some medals which are wanting to his series of the Twelve Cæsars; to put off buying the new edition of Bayle's Dictionary; and to wear his old sword and buckles another year. In this way he manages to send a hundred pounds to his friend. The next day he calls on Steele, and finds scores of gentlemen and ladies assembled. The fiddles are playing. The table is groaning under Champagne, Burgundy, and pyramids of sweetmeats. Is it strange that a man whose kindness is thus abused should send sheriff's officers to reclaim what is due him?

Tickell was a young man, fresh from Oxford, who had introduced himself to public notice by writing a most ingenious and graceful little poem in praise of the opera of "Rosamond." He deserved, and at length attained the first place in Addison's friendship. For a time Steele and Tickell were on good terms. But they loved Addison too much to love each other, and at length became as bitter enemies as the rival bulls in Virgil.

At the close of 1708 Wharton became Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and appointed Addison Chief Secretary. Addison was consequently under the necessity of quitting London for Dublin. Besides the chief secretaryship, which was then worth about two thousand pounds a year, he obtained a patent appointing him keeper of the Irish Records for life, with a salary of three or four hundred a year. Budgell accompanied his cousin in the capacity of private secretary.

Wharton and Addison had nothing in common but Whiggism. The Lord Lieutenant was not only licentious and corrupt, but was distinguished from other libertines and jobbers by a callous impudence which presented the strongest contrast to the Secretary's gentleness and delicacy. Many parts of the Irish administration at this time appear to have deserved serious blame. But against Addison there was not a murmur. He long afterwards asserted, what all the evidence which we have ever seen tends to prove, that his diligence and integrity gained the friendship of all the most considerable persons in Ireland.

The parliamentary career of Addison in Ireland has, we think, wholly escaped the notice of all his biographers. He was elected member for the borough of Cavan in the summer of 1709; and in the journals of two sessions his name frequently occurs. Some of the entries appear to indicate that he so far overcame his timidity as to make speeches. Nor is this by any means improbable; for the Irish House of Commons was a far less formidable audience than

the English House; and many tongues which were tied by fear in the greater assembly became fluent in the smaller. Gerard Hamilton, for example, who, from fear of losing the fame gained by his single speech, sat mute at Westminster during forty years spoke with great effect at Dublin when he was secretary to Lord Halifax.

While Addison was in Ireland, an event occurred to which he owes his high and permanent rank among British writers. As yet his fame rested on performances which, though highly respectable, were not built for duration, and which would, if he had produced nothing else, have now been almost forgotten, — on some excellent Latin verses, on some English verses which occasionally rose above mediocrity, and on a book of travels, agreeably written, but not indicating any extraordinary powers of mind. These works showed him to be a man of taste, sense, and learning. The time had come when he was to prove himself a man of genius, and to enrich our literature with compositions which will live as long as the English language.

In the spring of 1709 Steele formed a literary project, of which he was far indeed from foreseeing the consequences. Periodical papers had during many years been published in London. Most of these were political; but in some of them questions of morality, taste, and love casuistry had been discussed. The literary merit of these works was small indeed; and even their names are now known only to the curious.

Steele had been appointed Gazetteer by Sunder-

and, at the request, it is said, of Addison, and thus had access to foreign intelligence earlier and more authentic than was in those times within the reach of an ordinary news-writer. This circumstance seems to have suggested to him the scheme of publishing a periodical paper on a new plan. It was to appear on the days on which the post left London for the country, which were, in that generation, the Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. It was to contain the foreign news, accounts of theatrical representations, and the literary gossip of Will's and of the Grecian. It was also to contain remarks on the fashionable topics of the day, compliments to beauties, pasquinades on noted sharpers, and criticisms on popular preachers. The aim of Steele does not appear to have been at first higher than this. He was not ill qualified to conduct the work which he had planned. His public intelligence he drew from the best sources. He knew the town, and had paid dear for his knowledge. He had read much more than the dissipated men of that time were in the habit of reading. He was a rake among scholars, and a scholar among rakes. His style was easy and not incorrect; and, though his wit and humor were of no high order, his gay animal spirits imparted to his compositions an air of vivacity which ordinary readers could hardly distinguish from comic genius. His writings have been well compared to those light wines which, though deficient in body and flavor, are yet a pleasant small drink, if not kept too long, or carried too far.

Isaac Bickerstaff, Esquire, Astrologer, was an imaginary person, almost as well known in that age as Mr. Paul Pry or Mr. Samuel Pickwick in ours. Swift had assumed the name of Bickerstaff in a satirical pamphlet against Partridge, the maker of almanacs. Partridge had been fool enough to publish a furious reply. Bickerstaff had rejoined in a second pamphlet still more diverting than the first. All the wits had combined to keep up the joke, and the town was long in convulsions of laughter. Steele determined to employ the name which this controversy had made popular; and, in 1709, it was announced that Isaac Bickerstaff, Esquire, Astrologer, was about to publish a paper called the "Tatler."

Addison had not been consulted about this scheme; but as soon as he heard of it, he determined to give his assistance. The effect of that assistance cannot be better described than in Steele's own words. "I fared," he said, "like a distressed prince who calls in a powerful neighbor to his aid. I was undone by my auxiliary. When I had once called him in, I could not subsist without dependence on him." "The paper," he says elsewhere, "was advanced indeed. It was raised to a greater thing than I intended it."

It is probable that Addison, when he sent across St. George's Channel his first contributions to the "Tatler," had no notion of the extent and variety of his own powers. He was the possessor of a vast mine, rich with a hundred ores. But he had been acquainted only with the least precious part of his treasures, and had hitherto contented himself with

producing sometimes copper and sometimes lead, intermingled with a little silver. All at once, and by mere accident, he had lighted on an inexhaustible vein of the finest gold.

The mere choice and arrangement of his words would have sufficed to make his essays classical. For never, not even by Dryden, not even by Temple, had the English language been written with such sweetness, grace, and facility. But this was the smallest part of Addison's praise. Had he clothed his thoughts in the half French style of Horace Walpole, or in the half Latin style of Dr. Johnson, or in the half German jargon of the present day, his genius would have triumphed over all faults of manner. As a moral satirist he stands unrivalled. If ever the best "Tatlers" and "Spectators" were equalled in their own kind, we should be inclined to guess that it must have been by the lost comedies of Menander.

In wit, properly so called, Addison was not inferior to Cowley or Butler. No single ode of Cowley contains so many happy analogies as are crowded into the lines to Sir Godfrey Kneller; and we would undertake to collect from the "Spectators" as great a number of ingenious illustrations as can be found in *Hudibras*. The still higher faculty of invention Addison possessed in still larger measure. The numerous fictions, generally original, often wild and grotesque, but always singularly graceful and happy, which are found in his essays, fully entitle him to the rank of a great poet, a rank to which his metrical

compositions give him no claim. As an observer of life, of manner, of all the shades of human character, he stands in the first class. And what he observed he had the art of communicating in two widely different ways. He could describe virtues, vices, habits, whims, as well as Clarendon. But he could do something better. He could call human beings into existence, and make them exhibit themselves. If we wish to find anything more vivid than Addison's best portraits, we must go either to Shakspeare or Cervantes.

But what shall we say of Addison's humor, of his sense of the ludicrous, of his power of awakening that sense in others, and of drawing mirth from incidents which occur every day, and from little peculiarities of temper and manner, such as may be found in every man? We feel the charm; we give ourselves up to it; but we strive in vain to analyze it.

Perhaps the best way of describing Addison's peculiar pleasantry is to compare it with the pleasantry of some other great satirists. The three most eminent masters of the art of ridicule during the eighteenth century, were, we conceive, Addison, Swift, and Voltaire. Which of the three had the greatest power of moving laughter may be questioned. But each of them, within his own domain, was supreme.

Voltaire is the prince of buffoons. His merriment is without disguise or restraint. He gambols; he grins; he shakes the sides; he points the finger; he turns up the nose; he shoots out the tongue. The manner of Swift is the very opposite to this. He

moves laughter, but never joins in it. He appears in his works such as he appeared in society. All the company are convulsed with merriment, while the dean, the author of all the mirth, preserves an invincible gravity, and even sourness of aspect, and gives utterance to the most eccentric and ludicrous fancies, with the air of a man reading the commination service.

The manner of Addison is as remote from that of Swift as from that of Voltaire. He neither laughs out like the French wit, nor, like the Irish wit, throws a double portion of severity into his countenance while laughing inwardly; but preserves a look peculiarly his own, a look of demure serenity, disturbed only by an arch sparkle of the eye, an almost imperceptible elevation of the brow, an almost imperceptible curl of the lip. His tone is never that either of a Jack Pudding or of a Cynic. It is that of a gentleman, in whom the quickest sense of the ridiculous is constantly tempered by good-nature and good breeding.

We own that the humor of Addison is, in our opinion, of a more delicious flavor than the humor of either Swift or Voltaire. Thus much, at least, is certain, that both Swift and Voltaire have been successfully mimicked, and that no man has yet been able to mimic Addison. The letter of the Abbé Coyer to Pansophe is Voltaire all over, and imposed, during a long time, on the Academicians of Paris. There are passages in Arbuthnot's satirical works which we, at least, cannot distinguish from Swift's

best writing. But of the many eminent men who have made Addison their model, though several have copied his mere diction with happy effect, none have been able to catch the tone of his pleasantry. In the *World*, in the *Connoisseur*, in the *Mirror*, in the *Lounger*, there are numerous papers written in obvious imitation of his *Tatlers* and *Spectators*. Most of these papers have some merit: many are very lively and amusing; but there is not a single one which could be passed off as Addison's on a critic of the smallest perspicacity.

But that which chiefly distinguishes Addison from Swift, from Voltaire, from almost all the other great masters of ridicule, is the grace, the nobleness, the moral purity, which we find even in his merriment. Severity, gradually hardening and darkening into misanthropy, characterizes the works of Swift. The nature of Voltaire was, indeed, not inhuman; but he venerated nothing. Neither in the masterpieces of art nor in the purest examples of virtue, neither in the Great First Cause nor in the awful enigma of the grave, could he see anything but subjects for drolery. The more solemn and august the theme, the more monkey-like was his grimacing and chattering. The mirth of Swift is the mirth of Mephistophiles; the mirth of Voltaire is the mirth of Puck. If, as Soame Jenyns oddly imagined, a portion of the happiness of seraphim and just men made perfect be derived from an exquisite perception of the ludicrous, their mirth must surely be none other than the mirth of Addison; a mirth consistent with tender compas-

sion for all that is frail, and with profound reverence for all that is sublime. Nothing great, nothing amiable, no moral duty, no doctrine of natural or revealed religion, has ever been associated by Addison with any degrading idea. His humanity is without a parallel in literary history. The highest proof of virtue is to possess boundless power without abusing it. No kind of power is more formidable than the power of making men ridiculous; and that power Addison possessed in boundless measure. How grossly that power was abused by Swift and by Voltaire is well known. But of Addison it may be confidently affirmed that he has blackened no man's character, nay, that it would be difficult, if not impossible to find in all the volumes which he has left us a single taunt which can be called ungenerous or unkind. Yet he had detractors, whose malignity might have seemed to justify as terrible a revenge as that which men, not superior to him in genius, wreaked on Bettsworth and on Franc de Pompignan. He was a politician; he was the best writer of his party; he lived in times of fierce excitement, in times when persons of high character and station stooped to scurrility such as is now practised only by the basest of mankind. Yet no provocation and no example could induce him to return railing for railing.

Of the service which his Essays rendered to morality it is difficult to speak too highly. It is true, that, when the *Tatler* appeared, that age of outrageous profaneness and licentiousness which followed

the Restoration had passed away. Jeremy Collier had shamed the theatres into something which, compared with the excesses of Etherege and Wycherley, might be called decency. Yet there still lingered in the public mind a pernicious notion that there was some connection between genius and profligacy, between the domestic virtues and the sullen formality of the Puritans. That error it is the glory of Addison to have dispelled. He taught the nation that the faith and the morality of Hale and Tillotson might be found in company with wit more sparkling than the wit of Congreve, and with humor richer than the humor of Vanbrugh. So effectually, indeed, did he retort on vice the mockery which had recently been directed against virtue, that, since his time, the open violation of decency has always been considered among us as the mark of a fool. And this revolution, the greatest and most salutary ever effected by any satirist, he accomplished, be it remembered, without writing one personal lampoon.

In the early contributions of Addison to the *Tatler* his peculiar powers were not fully exhibited. Yet from the first, his superiority to all his coadjutors was evident. Some of his later *Tatlers* are fully equal to anything that he ever wrote. Among the portraits, we most admire Tom Folio, Ned Softly, and the Political Upholsterer. The proceedings of the Court of Honor, the Thermometer of Zeal, the story of the Frozen Words, the Memoirs of the Shilling, are excellent specimens of that ingenious and lively species of fiction in which Addison excelled all men.

There is one still better paper of the same class. But though that paper, a hundred and thirty-three years ago, was probably thought as edifying as one of Smalridge's sermons, we dare not indicate it to the squeamish readers of the nineteenth century.

During the session of Parliament which commenced in November, 1709, and which the impeachment of Sacheverell has made memorable, Addison appears to have resided in London. The Tatler was now more popular than any periodical paper had ever been; and his connection with it was generally known. It was not known, however, that almost everything good in the Tatler was his. The truth is, that the fifty or sixty numbers which we owe to him were not merely the best, but so decidedly the best that any five of them are more valuable than all the two hundred numbers in which he had no share.

He required, at this time, all the solace which he could derive from literary success. The queen had always disliked the Whigs. She had during some years disliked the Marlborough family. But, reigning by a disputed title, she could not venture directly to oppose herself to a majority of both Houses of Parliament; and, engaged as she was in a war on the event of which her own crown was staked, she could not venture to disgrace a great and successful general. But at length, in the year 1710, the causes which had restrained her from showing her aversion to the Low-Church party ceased to operate. The trial of Sacheverell produced an outbreak of public

feeling scarcely less violent than the outbreaks which we can ourselves remember in 1820 and in 1831. The country gentlemen, the country clergymen, the rabble of the towns, were all, for once, on the same side. It was clear that, if a general election took place before the excitement abated, the Tories would have a majority. The services of Marlborough had been so splendid that they were no longer necessary. The queen's throne was secure from all attack on the part of Louis. Indeed, it seemed much more likely that the English and German armies would divide the spoils of Versailles and Marli than that a marshal of France would bring back the Pretender to St. James's. The queen, acting by the advice of Harley, determined to dismiss her servants. In June the change commenced. Sunderland was the first who fell. The Tories exulted over his fall. The Whigs tried, during a few weeks, to persuade themselves that her Majesty had acted only from personal dislike to the Secretary, and that she meditated no further alteration. But, early in August, Godolphin was surprised by a letter from Anne, which directed him to break his white staff. Even after this event, the irresolution or dissimulation of Harley kept up the hopes of the Whigs during another month; and then the ruin became rapid and violent. The Parliament was dissolved. The Ministers were turned out. The Tories were called to office. The tide of popularity ran violently in favor of the High-Church party. That party, feeble in the late House of Commons, was now irresistible. The power which the

Tories had thus suddenly acquired, they used with blind and stupid ferocity. The howl which the whole pack set up for prey and for blood appalled even him who had roused and unchained them. When, at this distance of time, we calmly review the conduct of the discarded ministers, we cannot but feel a movement of indignation at the injustice with which they were treated. No body of men had ever administered the government with more energy, ability, and moderation; and their success had been proportioned to their wisdom. They had saved Holland and Germany. They had humbled France. They had, as it seemed, all but torn Spain from the House of Bourbon. They had made England the first power in Europe. At home they had united England and Scotland. They had respected the rights of conscience and the liberty of the subject. They retired leaving their country at the height of prosperity and glory. And yet they were pursued to their retreat by such a roar of obloquy as was never raised against the government which threw away thirteen colonies, or against the government which sent a gallant army to perish in the ditches of Walcheren.

None of the Whigs suffered more in the general wreck than Addison. He had just sustained some heavy pecuniary losses, of the nature of which we are imperfectly informed, when his secretaryship was taken from him. He had reason to believe that he should also be deprived of the small Irish office which he held by patent. He had just resigned his

Fellowship. It seems probable that he had already ventured to raise his eyes to a great lady, and that, while his political friends were in power, and while his own fortunes were rising, he had been, in the phrase of the romances which were then fashionable, permitted to hope. But Mr. Addison the ingenious writer, and Mr. Addison the chief Secretary, were, in her ladyship's opinion, two very different persons. All these calamities united, however, could not disturb the serene cheerfulness of a mind conscious of innocence, and rich in its own wealth. He told his friends, with smiling resignation, that they ought to admire his philosophy, that he had lost at once his fortune, his place, his Fellowship, and his mistress, that he must think of turning tutor again, and yet that his spirits were as good as ever.

He had one consolation. Of the unpopularity which his friends had incurred, he had no share. Such was the esteem with which he was regarded that, while the most violent measures were taken for the purpose of forcing Tory members on Whig corporations, he was returned to Parliament without even a contest. Swift, who was now in London, and who had already determined on quitting the Whigs, wrote to Stella in these remarkable words: "The Tories carry it among the new members six to one. Mr. Addison's election has passed easy and undisputed; and I believe if he had a mind to be king he would hardly be refused."

The good-will with which the Tories regarded Addison is the more honorable to him, because it

had not been purchased by any concession on his part. During the general election he published a political journal, entitled the "Whig Examiner." Of that journal it may be sufficient to say that Johnson, in spite of his strong political prejudices, pronounced it to be superior in wit to any of Swift's writings on the other side. When it ceased to appear, Swift, in a letter to Stella, expressed his exultation at the death of so formidable an antagonist. "He might well rejoice," says Johnson, "at the death of that which he could not have killed." "On no occasion," he adds, "was the genius of Addison more vigorously exerted, and on none did the superiority of his powers more evidently appear."

The only use which Addison appears to have made of the favor with which he was regarded by the Tories was to save some of his friends from the general ruin of the Whig party. He felt himself to be in a situation which made it his duty to take a decided part in politics. But the case of Steele and of Ambrose Phillipps was different. For Phillipps, Addison even condescended to solicit, with what success we have not ascertained. Steele held two places: he was Gazetteer, and he was also a Commissioner of Stamps. The Gazette was taken from him; but he was suffered to retain his place in the Stamp Office, on an implied understanding that he should not be active against the new government; and he was, during more than two years, induced by Addison to observe this armistice with tolerable fidelity.

Isaac Bickerstaff accordingly became silent upon

politics, and the article of news which had once formed about one third of his paper, altogether disappeared. The *Tatler* had completely changed its character. It was now nothing but a series of essays on books, morals, and manners. Steele therefore resolved to bring it to a close, and to commence a new work on an improved plan. It was announced that this new work would be published daily. The undertaking was generally regarded as bold, or rather rash; but the event amply justified the confidence with which Steele relied on the fertility of Addison's genius. On the 2d of January, 1711, appeared the last *Tatler*. At the beginning of March following appeared the first of an incomparable series of papers, containing observations on life and literature by an imaginary spectator.

The "*Spectator*" himself was conceived and drawn by Addison; and it is not easy to doubt that the portrait was meant to be in some features a likeness of the painter. The "*Spectator*" is a gentleman who, after passing a studious youth at the university, has travelled on classic ground, and has bestowed much attention on curious points of antiquity. He has, on his return, fixed his residence in London, and has observed all the forms of life which are to be found in that great city, has daily listened to the wits of Will's, has smoked with the philosophers of the Grecian, and has mingled with the parsons at Child's, and with the politicians at the St. James's. In the morning, he often listens to the hum of the Exchange; in the evening, his face is

constantly to be seen in the pit of Drury Lane theatre. But an insurmountable bashfulness prevents him from opening his mouth, except in a small circle of intimate friends.

These friends were first sketched by Steele. Four of the club, the templar, the clergyman, the soldier, and the merchant, were uninteresting figures, fit only for a background. But the other two, an old country baronet and an old town rake, though not delineated with a very delicate pencil, had some good strokes. Addison took the rude outlines into his own hands, retouched them, colored them, and is in truth the creator of the Sir Roger de Coverley and the Will Honeycomb with whom we are all familiar.

The plan of the Spectator must be allowed to be both original and eminently happy. Every valuable essay in the series may be read with pleasure separately; yet the five or six hundred essays form a whole, and a whole which has the interest of a novel. It must be remembered, too, that at that time no novel, giving a lively and powerful picture of the common life and manners of England, had appeared. Richardson was working as a compositor. Fielding was robbing birds'-nests. Smollett was not yet born. The narrative, therefore, which connects together the Spectator's Essays, gave to our ancestors their first taste of an exquisite and untried pleasure. That narrative was indeed constructed with no art or labor. The events were such events as occur every day. Sir Roger comes up to town to see Eugenio, as the worthy baronet always calls Prince

Eugene, goes with the Spectator on the water to Spring Gardens, walks among the tombs in the Abbey, and is frightened by the Mohawks, but conquers his apprehension so far as to go to the theatre when the "Distressed Mother" is acted. The Spectator pays a visit in the summer to Coverley Hall, is charmed with the old house, the old butler, and the old chaplain, eats a jack caught by Will Wimble, rides to the assizes, and hears a point of law discussed by Tom Touchy. At last a letter from the honest butler brings to the club the news that Sir Roger is dead. Will Honeycomb marries and reforms at sixty. The club breaks up; and the Spectator resigns his functions. Such events can hardly be said to form a plot; yet they are related with such truth, such grace, such wit, such humor, such pathos, such knowledge of the human heart, such knowledge of the ways of the world, that they charm us on the hundredth perusal. We have not the least doubt that if Addison had written a novel on an extensive plan, it would have been superior to any that we possess. As it is, he is entitled to be considered not only as the greatest of the English essayists, but as the forerunner of the great English novelists.

We say this of Addison alone; for Addison is the "Spectator." About three-sevenths of the work are his; and it is no exaggeration to say, that his worst essay is as good as the best essay of any of his coadjutors. His best essays approach near to absolute perfection; nor is their excellence more wonderful than their variety. His invention never

seems to flag; nor is he ever under the necessity of repeating himself, or of wearing out a subject. There are no dregs in his wine. He regales us after the fashion of that prodigal nabob who held that there was only one good glass in a bottle. As soon as we have tasted the first sparkling foam of a jest, it is withdrawn, and a fresh draught of nectar is at our lips. On the Monday we have an allegory as lively and ingenious as Lucian's Auction of Lives; on the Tuesday, an Eastern apologue, as richly colored as the Tales of Scheherezade; on the Wednesday, a character described with the skill of La Bruyere; on the Thursday, a scene from common life, equal to the best chapters in the "Vicar of Wakefield;" on the Friday, some sly Horatian pleasantry on fashionable follies, on hoops, patches, or puppet-shows; and on the Saturday, a religious meditation, which will bear a comparison with the finest passages in Massillon.

It is dangerous to select where there is so much that deserves the highest praise. We will venture, however, to say, that any person who wishes to form a notion of the extent and variety of Addison's powers, will do well to read at one sitting the following papers, the two "Visits to the Abbey," the "Visit to the Exchange," the "Journal of the Retired Citizen," the "Vision of Mirza," the "Transmigrations of Pug the Monkey," and the "Death of Sir Roger de Coverley."*

* Nos. 26, 329, 69, 317, 159, 343, 517. These papers are all in the first seven volumes. The eighth must be considered as a separate work.

The least valuable of Addison's contributions to the "Spectator" are, in the judgment of our age, his critical papers. Yet his critical papers are always luminous, and often ingenious. The very worst of them must be regarded as creditable to him, when the character of the school in which he had been trained is fairly considered. The best of them were much too good for his readers. In truth, he was not so far behind our generation as he was before his own. No essays in the "Spectator" were more censured and derided than those in which he raised his voice against the contempt with which our fine old ballads were regarded, and showed the scoffers that the same gold which, burnished and polished, gives lustre to the *Æneid* and the Odes of Horace, is mingled with the rude dross of Chevy Chase.

It is not strange that the success of the "Spectator" should have been such as no similar work has ever obtained. The number of copies daily distributed was at first three thousand. It subsequently increased, and had risen to nearly four thousand when the stamp-tax was imposed. That tax was fatal to a crowd of journals. The "Spectator," however, stood its ground, doubled its price, and, though its circulation fell off, still yielded a large revenue both to the state and to the authors. For particular papers the demand was immense; of some, it is said, twenty thousand copies were required. But this was not all. To have the "Spectator" served up every morning with the bohea and rolls was a luxury for the few. The majority were content to wait till

essays enough had appeared to form a volume. Ten thousand copies of each volume were immediately taken off, and new editions were called for. It must be remembered that the population of England was then hardly a third of what it now is. The number of Englishmen who were in the habit of reading, was probably not a sixth of what it now is. A shop-keeper or a farmer who found any pleasure in literature, was a rarity. Nay, there was doubtless more than one knight of the shire whose country seat did not contain ten books, receipt-books and books on farriery included. In these circumstances, the sale of the "Spectator" must be considered as indicating a popularity quite as great as that of the most successful works of Sir Walter Scott and Mr. Dickens in our own time.

At the close of 1712 the "Spectator" ceased to appear. It was probably felt that the shortfaced gentleman and his club had been long enough before the town; and that it was time to withdraw them, and to replace them by a new set of characters. In a few weeks the first number of the "Guardian" was published. But the "Guardian" was unfortunate both in its birth and in its death. It began in dullness, and disappeared in a tempest of faction. The original plan was bad. Addison contributed nothing till sixty-six numbers had appeared; and it was then impossible to make the "Guardian" what the "Spectator" had been. Nestor Ironside and the Miss Lizards were people to whom even he could impart no interest. He could only furnish some excellent little essays, both serious and comic; and this he did.

Why Addison gave no assistance to the "Guardian," during the first two months of its existence, is a question which has puzzled the editors and biographers, but which seems to us to admit of a very easy solution. He was then engaged in bringing his "Cato" on the stage.

The first four acts of this drama had been lying in his desk since his return from Italy. His modest and sensitive nature shrank from the risk of a public and shameful failure; and, though all who saw the manuscript were loud in praise, some thought it possible that an audience might become impatient even of very good rhetoric, and advised Addison to print the play without hazarding a representation. At length, after many fits of apprehension, the poet yielded to the urgency of his political friends, who hoped that the public would discover some analogy between the followers of Cæsar and the Tories, between Sempronius and the apostate Whigs, between Cato, struggling to the last for the liberties of Rome, and the band of patriots who still stood firm round Halifax and Wharton.

Addison gave the play to the managers of Drury Lane theatre, without stipulating for any advantage to himself. They, therefore, thought themselves bound to spare no cost in scenery and dresses. The decorations, it is true, would not have pleased the skilful eye of Mr. Macready. Juba's waistcoat blazed with gold lace; Marcia's hoop was worthy of a duchess on the birthday; and Cato wore a wig worth fifty guineas. The prologue was written by

Pope, and is undoubtedly a dignified and spirited composition. The part of the hero was excellently played by Booth. Steele undertook to pack a house. The boxes were in a blaze with the stars of the peers in Opposition. The pit was crowded with attentive and friendly listeners from the inns of court and the literary coffee-houses. Sir Gilbert Heathcote, governor of the Bank of England, was at the head of a powerful body of auxiliaries from the city, warm men and true Whigs, but better known at Jonathan's and Garraway's than in the haunts of wits and critics.

These precautions were quite superfluous. The Tories, as a body, regarded Addison with no unkind feelings. Nor was it for their interest, professing, as they did, profound reverence for law and prescription, and abhorrence both of popular insurrections and of standing armies, to appropriate to themselves reflections thrown on the great military chief and demagogue, who, with the support of the legions and of the common people, subverted all the ancient institutions of his country. Accordingly, every shout that was raised by the members of the Kit Cat was echoed by the High-Churchmen of the October; and the curtain at length fell amidst thunders of unanimous applause.

The delight and admiration of the town were described by the "Guardian" in terms which we might attribute to partiality, were it not that the "Examiner," the organ of the ministry, held similar language. The Tories, indeed, found much to sneer at in the conduct of their opponents. Steele had on this, as

on other occasions, shown more zeal than taste or judgment. The honest citizens who marched under the orders of Sir Gibby, as he was facetiously called, probably knew better when to buy and when to sell stock than when to clap and when to hiss at a play, and incurred some ridicule by making the hypocritical Sempronius their favorite, and by giving to his insincere rants louder plaudits than they bestowed on the temperate eloquence of Cato. Wharton, too, who had the incredible effrontery to applaud the lines about flying from prosperous vice and from the power of impious men to a private station, did not escape the sarcasms of those who justly thought that he could fly from nothing more vicious or impious than himself. The epilogue, which was written by Garth, a zealous Whig, was severely and not unreasonably censured as ignoble and out of place. But Addison was described, even by the bitterest Tory writers, as a gentleman of wit and virtue, in whose friendship many persons of both parties were happy, and whose name ought not to be mixed up with factious squabbles.

Of the jests by which the triumph of the Whig party was disturbed, the most severe and happy was Bolingbroke's. Between two acts, he sent for Booth to his box, and presented him, before the whole theatre, with a purse of fifty guineas for defending the cause of liberty so well against a perpetual Dictator. This was a pungent allusion to the attempt which Marlborough had made, not long before his fall, to obtain a patent creating him captain-general for life.

It was April; and in April, a hundred and thirty years ago, the London season was thought to be far advanced. During a whole month, however, "Cato" was performed to overflowing houses, and brought into the treasury of the theatre twice the gains of an ordinary spring. In the summer the Drury Lane company went down to the Act at Oxford, and there, before an audience which retained an affectionate remembrance of Addison's accomplishments and virtues, his tragedy was enacted during several days. The gownsmen began to besiege the theatre in the forenoon, and by one in the afternoon all the seats were filled.

About the merits of the piece which had so extraordinary an effect, the public, we suppose, has made up its mind. To compare it with the masterpieces of the Attic stage, with the great English dramas of the time of Elizabeth, or even with the productions of Schiller's manhood, would be absurd indeed. Yet it contains excellent dialogue and declamation, and, among plays fashioned on the French model, must be allowed to rank high; not, indeed, with *Athalie* or *Saul*; but, we think, not below *Cinna*, and certainly above any other English tragedy of the same school, above many of the plays of *Corneille*, above many of the plays of *Voltaire* and *Alfieri*, and above some plays of *Racine*. Be this as it may, we have little doubt that *Cato* did as much as the *Tatlers*, *Spectators*, and *Freeholders* united, to raise Addison's fame among his contemporaries.

The modesty and good-nature of the successful

dramatist had tamed even the malignity of faction. But literary envy, it should seem, is a fiercer passion than party spirit. It was by a zealous Whig that the fiercest attack on the Whig tragedy was made. John Dennis published "Remarks on Cato," which were written with some acuteness and with much coarseness and asperity. Addison neither defended himself nor retaliated. On many points he had an excellent defence; and nothing would have been easier than to retaliate; for Dennis had written bad odes, bad tragedies, bad comedies: he had, moreover, a larger share than most men of those infirmities and eccentricities which excite laughter; and Addison's power of turning either an absurd book or an absurd man into ridicule was unrivalled. Addison, however, serenely conscious of his superiority, looked with pity on his assailant, whose temper, naturally irritable and gloomy, had been soured by want, by controversy, and by literary failures.

But among the young candidates for Addison's favor there was one distinguished by talents from the rest, and distinguished, we fear, not less by malignity and insincerity. Pope was only twenty-five; but his powers had expanded to their full maturity; and his best poem, the "Rape of the Lock," had recently been published. Of his genius, Addison had always expressed high admiration. But Addison had early discerned, what might indeed have been discerned by an eye less penetrating than his, that the diminutive, crooked, sickly boy was eager to revenge himself on society for the unkind-

ness of nature. In the *Spectator*, the "Essay on Criticism" had been praised with cordial warmth; but a gentle hint had been added, that the writer of so excellent a poem would have done well to avoid ill-natured personalities. Pope, though evidently more galled by the censure than gratified by the praise, returned thanks for the admonition, and promised to profit by it. The two writers continued to exchange civilities, counsel, and small good offices. Addison publicly extolled Pope's miscellaneous pieces; and Pope furnished Addison with a prologue. This did not last long. Pope hated Dennis, whom he had injured without provocation. The appearance of the *Remarks on Cato* gave the irritable poet an opportunity of venting his malice under the show of friendship; and such an opportunity could not but be welcomed by a nature which was implacable in enmity, and which always preferred the tortuous to the straight path. He published, accordingly, the "Narrative of the Frenzy of John Dennis." But Pope had mistaken his powers. He was a great master of invective and sarcasm; he could dissect a character in terse and sonorous couplets, brilliant with antithesis; but of dramatic talent he was altogether destitute. If he had written a lampoon on Dennis, such as that on Atticus, or that on Sporus, the old grumbler would have been crushed. But Pope writing dialogue resembled — to borrow Horace's imagery and his own — a wolf, which, instead of biting, should take to kicking, or a monkey which should try to sting. The narrative is utterly con-

temptible. Of argument there is not even the show; and the jests are such as, if they were introduced into a farce, would call forth the hisses of the shilling gallery. Dennis raves about the drama; and the nurse thinks that he is calling for a dram. "There is," he cries, "no peripetia in the tragedy, no change of fortune, no change at all." "Pray, good sir, be not angry," says the old woman; "I'll fetch change." This is not exactly the pleasantry of Addison.

There can be no doubt that Addison saw through this officious zeal, and felt himself deeply aggrieved by it. So foolish and spiteful a pamphlet could do him no good, and, if he were thought to have had any hand in it, must do him harm. Gifted with incomparable powers of ridicule, he had never, even in self-defence, used those powers inhumanly or uncourteously; and he was not disposed to let others make his fame and his interests a pretext under which they might commit outrages from which he had himself constantly abstained. He accordingly declared that he had no concern in the narrative, that he disapproved of it, and that if he answered the Remarks, he would answer them like a gentleman; and he took care to communicate this to Dennis. Pope was bitterly mortified; and to this transaction we are inclined to ascribe the hatred with which he ever after regarded Addison.

In September, 1713, the Guardian ceased to appear. Steele had gone mad about politics. A general election had just taken place: he had been chosen

member for Stockbridge; and he fully expected to play a first part in Parliament. The immense success of the *Tatler* and *Spectator* had turned his head. He had been the editor of both those papers, and was not aware how entirely they owed their influence and popularity to the genius of his friend. His spirits, always violent, were now excited by vanity, ambition, and faction to such a pitch that he every day committed some offence against good sense and good taste. All the discreet and moderate members of his own party regretted and condemned his folly. "I am in a thousand troubles," Addison wrote, "about poor Dick, and wish that his zeal for the public may not be ruinous to himself. But he has sent me word that he is determined to go on, and that any advice I may give him in this particular will have no weight with him."

Steele set up a political paper called the "*Englishman*," which, as it was not supported by contributions from Addison, completely failed. By this work, by some other writings of the same kind, and by the airs which he gave himself at the first meeting of the new Parliament, he made the Tories so angry that they determined to expel him. The Whigs stood by him gallantly, but were unable to save him. The vote of expulsion was regarded by all dispassionate men as a tyrannical exercise of the power of the majority. But Steele's violence and folly, though they by no means justified the steps which his enemies took, had completely disgusted his friends; nor did he ever regain the place which he had held in the public estimation.

Addison about this time conceived the design of adding an eighth volume to the *Spectator*. In June, 1714, the first number of the new series appeared, and during about six months three papers were published weekly. Nothing can be more striking than the contrast between the *Englishman* and the eighth volume of the *Spectator*, between Steele without Addison, and Addison without Steele. The *Englishman* is forgotten; the eighth volume of the *Spectator* contains, perhaps, the finest essays, both serious and playful, in the English language.

Before this volume was completed, the death of Anne produced an entire change in the administration of public affairs. The blow fell suddenly. It found the Tory party distracted by internal feuds, and unprepared for any great effort. Harley had just been disgraced. Bolingbroke, it was supposed, would be the chief minister. But the queen was on her death-bed before the white staff had been given, and her last public act was to deliver it with a feeble hand to the Duke of Shrewsbury. The emergency produced a coalition between all sections of public men who were attached to the Protestant succession. George I. was proclaimed without opposition. A council, in which the leading Whigs had seats, took the direction of affairs till the new king should arrive. The first act of the Lords Justices was to appoint Addison their secretary.

There is an idle tradition that he was directed to prepare a letter to the king, that he could not satisfy himself as to the style of this composition, and that

the Lords Justices called in a clerk who at once did what was wanted. It is not strange that a story so flattering to mediocrity should be popular; and we are sorry to deprive dunces of their consolation. But the truth must be told. It was well observed by Sir James Mackintosh, whose knowledge of these times was unequalled, that Addison never, in any official document, affected wit or eloquence, and that his despatches are, without exception, remarkable for unpretending simplicity. Everybody who knows with what ease Addison's finest essays were produced must be convinced that, if well-turned phrases had been wanted, he would have had no difficulty in finding them. We are, however, inclined to believe that the story is not absolutely without a foundation. It may well be that Addison did not know, till he had consulted experienced clerks who remembered the times when William III. was absent on the continent, in what form a letter from the council of regency to the king ought to be drawn. We think it very likely that the ablest statesmen of our time, Lord John Russell, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Palmerston, for example, would, in similar circumstances, be found quite as ignorant. Every office has some little mysteries which the dullest man may learn with a little attention, and which the greatest man cannot possibly know by intuition. One paper must be signed by the chief of the department; another by his deputy; to a third the royal sign manual is necessary. One communication is to be registered, and another is not. One sentence must be in black ink, and another

in red ink. If the ablest secretary for Ireland were moved to the India Board, if the ablest president of the India Board were moved to the War Office, he would require instruction on points like these; and we do not doubt that Addison required such instruction when he became, for the first time, secretary to the Lords Justices.

George I. took possession of his kingdom without opposition. A new ministry was formed, and a new Parliament favorable to the Whigs chosen. Sunderland was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; and Addison again went to Dublin as chief secretary.

At Dublin, Swift resided; and there was much speculation about the way in which the dean and the secretary would behave towards each other. The relations which existed between these remarkable men form an interesting and pleasing portion of literary history. They had early attached themselves to the same political party and to the same patrons. While Anne's Whig ministry was in power, the visits of Swift to London, and the official residence of Addison in Ireland, had given them opportunities of knowing each other. They were the two shrewdest observers of their age. But their observations on each other had led them to favorable conclusions. Swift did full justice to the rare powers of conversation which were latent under the bashful deportment of Addison. Addison, on the other hand, discerned much good-nature under the severe look and manner of Swift; and, indeed, the Swift of 1708 and the Swift of 1738 were two very different men.

But the paths of the two friends diverged widely. The Whig statesmen loaded Addison with solid benefits. They praised Swift, asked him to dinner, and did nothing more for him. His profession laid them under a difficulty. In the state they could not promote him; and they had reason to fear that, by bestowing preferment in the Church on the author of the "Tale of a Tub," they might give scandal to the public, which had no high opinion of their orthodoxy. He did not make fair allowance for the difficulties which prevented Halifax and Somers from serving him, thought himself an ill-used man, sacrificed honor and consistency to revenge, joined the Tories, and became their most formidable champion. He soon found, however, that his old friends were less to blame than he had supposed. The dislike with which the queen and the heads of the Church regarded him was insurmountable; and it was with the greatest difficulty that he obtained an ecclesiastical dignity of no great value, on condition of fixing his residence in a country which he detested.

Difference of political opinion had produced, not indeed a quarrel, but a coolness between Swift and Addison. They at length ceased altogether to see each other. Yet there was between them a tacit compact like that between the hereditary guests in the Iliad.

*Ἔγχεα δ' ἀλλήλων ἀλεώμεθα καὶ δι' ὀμίλου·
Πολλοὶ μὲν γὰρ ἐμοὶ Τρῶες κλειτοὶ τ' ἐπίκουροι,
Κτείνειν, ὃν κε θεός γε πόρῃ καὶ ποσσὶ κίχελαι,
Πολλοὶ δ' αὖ σοὶ Ἀχαιοὶ, ἐναίρμεν, ὃν κε δύνηαι.*

It is not strange that Addison, who calumniated and insulted nobody, should not have calumniated or insulted Swift. But it is remarkable that Swift, to whom neither genius nor virtue was sacred, and who generally seemed to find, like most other renegades, a peculiar pleasure in attacking old friends, should have shown so much respect and tenderness to Addison.

Fortune had now changed. The accession of the House of Hanover had secured in England the liberties of the people, and in Ireland the dominion of the Protestant caste. To that caste Swift was more odious than any other man. He was hooted and even pelted in the streets of Dublin; and could not venture to ride along the strand for his health without the attendance of armed servants. Many whom he had formerly served now libelled and insulted him. At this time Addison arrived. He had been advised not to show the smallest civility to the dean of St. Patrick's. He had answered, with admirable spirit, that it might be necessary for men whose fidelity to their party was suspected, to hold no intercourse with political opponents; but that one who had been a steady Whig in the worst times might venture, when the good cause was triumphant, to shake hands with an old friend who was one of the vanquished Tories. His kindness was soothing to the proud and cruelly wounded spirit of Swift; and the two great satirists resumed their habits of friendly intercourse.

Those associates of Addison whose political opin-

ions agreed with his shared his good-fortune. He took Tickell with him to Ireland. He procured for Budgell a lucrative place in the same kingdom. Ambrose Phillipps was provided for in England. Steele had injured himself so much by his eccentricity and perverseness, that he obtained but a very small part of what he thought his due. He was, however, knighted; he had a place in the household; and he subsequently received other marks of favor from the court.

Addison did not remain long in Ireland. In 1715 he quitted his secretaryship for a seat at the Board of Trade. In the same year his comedy of the Drummer was brought on the stage. The name of the author was not announced; the piece was coldly received; and some critics have expressed a doubt whether it were really Addison's. To us the evidence, both external and internal, seems decisive. It is not in Addison's best manner; but it contains numerous passages which no other writer known to us could have produced. It was again performed after Addison's death, and, being known to be his, was loudly applauded.

Towards the close of the year 1715, while the Rebellion was still raging in Scotland, Addison published the first number of a paper called the "Freeholder." Among his political works the "Freeholder" is entitled to the first place. Even in the "Spectator" there are few serious papers nobler than the character of his friend Lord Somers, and certainly no satirical papers superior to those in which the

Tory fox-hunter is introduced. This character is the original of Squire Western, and is drawn with all Fielding's force, and with a delicacy of which Fielding was altogether destitute. As none of Addison's works exhibit stronger marks of his genius than the "Freeholder," so none does more honor to his moral character. It is difficult to extol too highly the candor and humanity of a political writer whom even the excitement of civil war cannot hurry into unseemly violence. Oxford, it is well known, was then the stronghold of Toryism. The High Street had been repeatedly lined with bayonets in order to keep down the disaffected gowmsmen; and traitors pursued by the messengers of the government had been concealed in the garrets of several colleges. Yet the admonition which, even under such circumstances, Addison addressed to the University, is singularly gentle, respectful, and even affectionate. Indeed, he could not find it in his heart to deal harshly even with imaginary persons. His fox-hunter, though ignorant, stupid, and violent, is at heart a good fellow, and is at last reclaimed by the clemency of the king. Steele was dissatisfied with his friend's moderation, and, though he acknowledged that the "Freeholder" was excellently written, complained that the ministry played on a lute when it was necessary to blow the trumpet. He accordingly determined to execute a flourish after his own fashion, and tried to rouse the public spirit of the nation by means of a paper called the "Town Talk," which is now as utterly forgotten as his "Englishman," as his "Crisis,"

as his "Letter to the Bailiff of Stockbridge," as his "Reader," in short, as everything that he wrote without the help of Addison.

In the same year in which the "Drummer" was acted, and in which the first numbers of the "Freeholder" appeared, the estrangement of Pope and Addison became complete. Addison had from the first seen that Pope was false and malevolent. Pope had discovered that Addison was jealous. The discovery was made in a strange manner. Pope had written the "Rape of the Lock," in two cantos, without supernatural machinery. These two cantos had been loudly applauded, and by none more loudly than by Addison. Then Pope thought of the Sylphs and Gnomes, Ariel, Momentilla, Crispissa, and Umbriel, and resolved to interweave the Rosicrucian mythology with the original fabric. He asked Addison's advice. Addison said that the poem as it stood was a delicious little thing, and entreated Pope not to run the risk of marring what was so excellent in trying to mend it. Pope afterwards declared that this insidious counsel first opened his eyes to the baseness of him who gave it.

Now there can be no doubt that Pope's plan was most ingenious, and that he afterwards executed it with great skill and success. But does it necessarily follow that Addison's advice was bad? And if Addison's advice was bad, does it necessarily follow that it was given from bad motives? If a friend were to ask us whether we would advise him to risk his all in a lottery of which the chances were ten to

one against him, we should do our best to dissuade him from running such a risk. Even if he were so lucky as to get the thirty-thousand-pound prize, we should not admit that we had counselled him ill; and we should certainly think it the height of injustice in him to accuse us of having been actuated by malice. We think Addison's advice good advice. It rested on a sound principle, the result of long and wide experience. The general rule undoubtedly is, that, when a successful work of imagination has been produced, it should not be recast. We cannot at this moment call to mind a single instance in which this rule has been transgressed with happy effect, except the instance of the "Rape of the Lock." Tasso recast his "Jerusalem." Akenside recast his "Pleasures of the Imagination," and his "Epistle to Curio." Pope himself, emboldened, no doubt, by the success with which he had expanded and remodelled the "Rape of the Lock," made the same experiment on the "Dunciad." All these attempts failed. Who was to foresee that Pope would, once in his life, be able to do what he could not himself do twice, and what nobody else has ever done?

Addison's advice was good. But had it been bad, why should we pronounce it dishonest? Scott tells us that one of his best friends predicted the failure of "Waverley." Herder adjured Goethe not to take so unpromising a subject as Faust. Hume tried to dissuade Robertson from writing the "History of Charles the Fifth." Nay, Pope himself was one of those who prophesied that "Cato" would never succeed on the

stage, and advised Addison to print it without risking a representation. But Scott, Goethe, Robertson, Addison, had the good sense and generosity to give their advisers credit for the best intentions. Pope's heart was not of the same kind with theirs.

In 1715, while he was engaged in translating the Iliad, he met Addison at a coffee-house. Phillipps and Budgell were there; but their sovereign got rid of them, and asked Pope to dine with him alone. After dinner, Addison said that he lay under a difficulty which he wished to explain. "Tickell," he said, "translated some time ago the first book of the Iliad. I have promised to look it over and correct it. I cannot therefore ask to see yours, for that would be double-dealing." Pope made a civil reply, and begged that his second book might have the advantage of Addison's revision. Addison readily agreed, looked over the second book, and sent it back with warm commendations.

Tickell's version of the first book appeared soon after this conversation. In the preface, all rivalry was earnestly disclaimed. Tickell declared that he should not go on with the Iliad. That enterprise he should leave to powers which he admitted to be superior to his own. His only view, he said, in publishing this specimen was to bespeak the favor of the public to a translation of the Odyssey, in which he had made some progress.

Addison, and Addison's devoted followers, pronounced both the versions good, but maintained that Tickell's had more of the original. The town gave

a decided preference to Pope's. We do not think it worth while to settle such a question of precedence. Neither of the rivals can be said to have translated the Iliad, unless, indeed, the word translation be used in the sense which it bears in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*. When Bottom makes his appearance with an ass's head instead of his own, Peter Quince exclaims, "Bless thee! Bottom, bless thee! thou art translated." In this sense, undoubtedly, the readers of either Pope or Tickell may very properly exclaim, "Bless thee! Homer; thou art translated indeed."

Our readers will, we hope, agree with us in thinking that no man in Addison's situation could have acted more fairly and kindly, both towards Pope and towards Tickell, than he appears to have done. But an odious suspicion had sprung up in the mind of Pope. He fancied, and he soon firmly believed, that there was a deep conspiracy against his fame and his fortunes. The work on which he had staked his reputation was to be depreciated. The subscription, on which rested his hopes of a competence, was to be defeated. With this view Addison had made a rival translation; Tickell had consented to father it; and the wits of Button's had united to push it.

Is there any external evidence to support this grave accusation? The answer is short. There is absolutely none.

Was there any internal evidence which proved Addison to be the author of this version? Was it a work which Tickell was incapable of producing? Surely not. Tickell was a Fellow of a College at

Oxford, and must be supposed to have been able to construe the Iliad; and he was a better versifier than his friend. We are not aware that Pope pretended to have discovered any turns of expression peculiar to Addison. Had such turns of expression been discovered, they would be sufficiently accounted for by supposing Addison to have corrected his friend's lines, as he owned that he had done.

Is there anything in the character of the accused persons which makes the accusation probable? We answer confidently—Nothing. Tickell was long after this time described by Pope himself as a very fair and worthy man. Addison had been during many years before the public. Literary rivals, political opponents, had kept their eyes on him. But neither envy nor faction, in their utmost rage, had ever imputed to him a single deviation from the laws of honor and of social morality. Had he been indeed a man meanly jealous of fame, and capable of stooping to base and wicked arts for the purpose of injuring his competitors, would his vices have remained latent so long? He was a writer of tragedy: had he ever injured Rowe? He was a writer of comedy: had he not done ample justice to Congreve, and given valuable help to Steele? He was a pamphleteer: have not his good-nature and generosity been acknowledged by Swift, his rival in fame and his adversary in politics?

That Tickell should have been guilty of a villany seems to us highly improbable. That Addison should have been guilty of a villany seems to us highly im-

probable. But that these two men should have conspired together to commit a villany seems to us improbable in a tenfold degree. All that is known to us of their intercourse tends to prove that it was not the intercourse of two accomplices in crime. These are some of the lines in which Tickell poured forth his sorrow over the coffin of Addison :

“Or dost thou warn poor mortals left behind,
A task well suited to thy gentle mind?
Oh, if sometimes thy spotless form descend,
To me thine aid, thou guardian genius, lend.
When rage misguides me, or when fear alarms,
When pain distresses, or when pleasure charms,
In silent whisperings purer thoughts impart,
And turn from ill a frail and feeble heart;
Lead through the paths thy virtue trod before,
Till bliss shall join, nor death can part us more.”

In what words, we should like to know, did this guardian genius invite his pupil to join in a plan such as the editor of the “*Satirist*” would hardly dare to propose to the editor of the “*Age*”?

We do not accuse Pope of bringing an accusation which he knew to be false. We have not the smallest doubt that he believed it to be true; and the evidence on which he believed it he found in his own bad heart. His own life was one long series of tricks, as mean and as malicious as that of which he suspected Addison and Tickell. He was all stiletto and mask. To injure, to insult, and to save himself from the consequences of injury and insult by lying and equivocating, was the habit of his life. He published a lampoon on the Duke of Chandos: he was

taxed with it; and he lied and equivocated. He published a lampoon on Aaron Hill: he was taxed with it; and he lied and equivocated. He published a still fouler lampoon on Lady Mary Wortley Montague; he was taxed with it; and he lied with more than usual effrontery and vehemence. He puffed himself and abused his enemies under feigned names. He robbed himself of his own letters, and then raised the hue and cry after them. Besides his frauds of malignity, of fear, of interest, and of vanity, there were frauds which he seems to have committed from love of fraud alone. He had a habit of stratagem, a pleasure in outwitting all who came near him. Whatever his object might be, the indirect road to it was that which he preferred. For Bolingbroke, Pope undoubtedly felt as much love and veneration as it was in his nature to feel for any human being. Yet Pope was scarcely dead when it was discovered that, from no motive except the mere love of artifice, he had been guilty of an act of gross perfidy to Bolingbroke.

Nothing was more natural than that such a man as this should attribute to others that which he felt within himself. A plain, probable, coherent explanation is frankly given to him. He is certain that it is all a romance. A line of conduct scrupulously fair, and even friendly, is pursued towards him. He is convinced that it is merely a cover for a vile intrigue by which he is to be disgraced and ruined. It is vain to ask him for proofs. He has none, and wants none, except those which he carries in his own bosom.

Whether Pope's malignity at length provoked Addison to retaliate for the first and last time, cannot now be known with certainty. We have only Pope's story, which runs thus: A pamphlet appeared containing some reflections which stung Pope to the quick. What those reflections were, and whether they were reflections of which he had a right to complain, we have now no means of deciding. The Earl of Warwick, a foolish and vicious lad, who regarded Addison with the feelings with which such lads generally regard their best friends, told Pope, truly or falsely, that this pamphlet had been written by Addison's direction. When we consider what a tendency stories have to grow, in passing even from one honest man to another honest man, and when we consider that to the name of honest man neither Pope nor the Earl of Warwick had a claim, we are not disposed to attach much importance to this anecdote.

It is certain, however, that Pope was furious. He had already sketched the character of Atticus in prose. In his anger he turned this prose into the brilliant and energetic lines which everybody knows by heart, or ought to know by heart, and sent them to Addison. One charge which Pope has enforced with great skill is probably not without foundation. Addison was, we are inclined to believe, too fond of presiding over a circle of humble friends. Of the other imputations which these famous lines are intended to convey, scarcely one has ever been proved to be just, and some are certainly false. That Addi-

son was not in the habit of "damning with faint praise" appears from innumerable passages in his writings, and from none more than from those in which he mentions Pope. And it is not merely unjust, but ridiculous, to describe a man who made the fortune of almost every one of his intimate friends, as "so obliging that he ne'er obliged."

That Addison felt the sting of Pope's satire keenly, we cannot doubt. That he was conscious of one of the weaknesses with which he was reproached is highly probable. But his heart, we firmly believe, acquitted him of the gravest part of the accusation. He acted like himself. As a satirist he was, at his own weapons, more than Pope's match; and he would have been at no loss for topics. A distorted and diseased body, tenanted by a yet more distorted and diseased mind; spite and envy thinly disguised by sentiments as benevolent and noble as those which Sir Peter Teazle admired in Mr. Joseph Surface; a feeble sickly licentiousness; an odious love of filthy and noisome images; these were things which a genius less powerful than that to which we owe the "Spectator" could easily have held up to the mirth and hatred of mankind. Addison had, moreover, at his command, other means of vengeance which a bad man would not have scrupled to use. He was powerful in the state. Pope was a Catholic; and, in those times, a minister would have found it easy to harass the most innocent Catholic by innumerable petty vexations. Pope, nearly twenty years later, said that "through the lenity of the government

alone he could live with comfort." "Consider," he exclaimed, "the injury that a man of high rank and credit may do to a private person, under penal laws and many other disadvantages." It is pleasing to reflect that the only revenge which Addison took was to insert in the "Freeholder" a warm encomium on the translation of the Iliad, and to exhort all lovers of learning to put down their names as subscribers. There could be no doubt, he said, from the specimens already published, that the masterly hand of Pope would do as much for Homer as Dryden had done for Virgil. From that time to the end of his life, he always treated Pope, by Pope's own acknowledgment, with justice. Friendship was, of course, at an end.

One reason which induced the Earl of Warwick to play the ignominious part of talebearer on this occasion, may have been his dislike of the marriage which was about to take place between his mother and Addison. The countess-dowager, a daughter of the old and honorable family of the Middletons of Chirk, a family which, in any country but ours, would be called noble, resided at Holland House. Addison had, during some years, occupied at Chelsea a small dwelling, once the abode of Nell Gwynn. Chelsea is now a district of London, and Holland House may be called a town residence. But in the days of Anne and George I., milkmaids and sportsmen wandered between green hedges, and over fields bright with daisies, from Kensington almost to the shore of the Thames. Addison and Lady Warwick were

country neighbors, and became intimate friends. The great wit and scholar tried to allure the young lord from the fashionable amusements of beating watchmen, breaking windows, and rolling women in hogsheads down Holborn Hill, to the study of letters and the practice of virtue. These well-meant exertions did little good, however, either to the disciple or to the master. Lord Warwick grew up a rake; and Addison fell in love. The mature beauty of the countess has been celebrated by poets in language which, after a very large allowance has been made for flattery, would lead us to believe that she was a fine woman; and her rank doubtless heightened her attractions. The courtship was long. The hopes of the lover appear to have risen and fallen with the fortunes of his party. His attachment was at length matter of such notoriety that, when he visited Ireland for the last time, Rowe addressed some consolatory verses to the Chloe of Holland House. It strikes us as a little strange that, in these verses, Addison should be called Lycidas, a name of singularly evil omen for a swain just about to cross St. George's Channel.

At length Chloe capitulated. Addison was indeed able to treat with her on equal terms. He had reason to expect preferment even higher than that which he had attained. He had inherited the fortune of a brother who died Governor of Madras. He had purchased an estate in Warwickshire, and had been welcomed to his domain in very tolerable verse by one of the neighboring squires, the poetical fox-hunter;

William Somerville. In August, 1716, the newspapers announced that Joseph Addison, Esquire, famous for many excellent works both in verse and prose, had espoused the Countess Dowager of Warwick.

He now fixed his abode at Holland House, a house which can boast of a greater number of inmates distinguished in political and literary history than any other private dwelling in England. His portrait still hangs there. The features are pleasing; the complexion is remarkably fair; but, in the expression we trace rather the gentleness of his disposition than the force and keenness of his intellect.

Not long after his marriage he reached the height of civil greatness. The Whig government had, during some time, been torn by internal dissensions. Lord Townshend led one section of the cabinet, Lord Sunderland the other. At length, in the spring of 1717, Sunderland triumphed. Townshend retired from office, and was accompanied by Walpole and Cowper. Sunderland proceeded to reconstruct the ministry; and Addison was appointed Secretary of State. It is certain that the Seals were pressed upon him, and were at first declined by him. Men equally versed in official business might easily have been found; and his colleagues knew that they could not expect assistance from him in debate. He owed his elevation to his popularity, to his stainless probity, and to his literary fame.

But scarcely had Addison entered the cabinet when

his health began to fail. From one serious attack he recovered in the autumn; and his recovery was celebrated in Latin verses, worthy of his own pen, by Vincent Bourne, who was then at Trinity College, Cambridge. A relapse soon took place; and, in the following spring, Addison was prevented by a severe asthma from discharging the duties of his post. He resigned it, and was succeeded by his friend Craggs, a young man whose natural parts, though little improved by cultivation, were quick and showy, whose graceful person and winning manners had made him generally acceptable in society, and who, if he had lived, would probably have been the most formidable of all the rivals of Walpole.

As yet there was no Joseph Hume. The ministers, therefore, were able to bestow on Addison a retiring pension of fifteen hundred pounds a year. In what form this pension was given we are not told by the biographers, and have not time to inquire. But it is certain that Addison did not vacate his seat in the House of Commons.

Rest of mind and body seems to have re-established his health; and he thanked God, with cheerful piety, for having set him free both from his office and from his asthma. Many years seemed to be before him, and he meditated many works, a tragedy on the death of Socrates, a translation of the Psalms, a treatise on the evidences of Christianity. Of this last performance, a part, which we could well spare, has come down to us.

But the fatal complaint soon returned, and gradually prevailed against all the resources of medicine. It is melancholy to think that the last months of such a life should have been overclouded both by domestic and by political vexations. A tradition which began early, which has been generally received, and to which we have nothing to oppose, has represented his wife as an arrogant and imperious woman. It is said that, till his health failed him, he was glad to escape from the countess-dowager and her magnificent dining-room, blazing with the gilded devices of the House of Rich, to some tavern where he could enjoy a laugh, a talk about Virgil and Boileau, and a bottle of claret, with the friends of his happier days. All those friends, however, were not left to him. Sir Richard Steele had been gradually estranged by various causes. He considered himself as one who, in evil times, had braved martyrdom for his political principles, and demanded, when the Whig party was triumphant, a large compensation for what he had suffered when it was militant. The Whig leaders took a very different view of his claims. They thought that he had, by his own petulance and folly, brought them as well as himself into trouble, and though they did not absolutely neglect him, doled out favors to him with a sparing hand. It was natural that he should be angry with them, and especially angry with Addison. But what above all seems to have disturbed Sir Richard, was the elevation of Tickell, who, at thirty, was made by Addison Undersecretary of State; while the editor of the Tatler

and Spectator, the author of the Crisis, the member for Stockbridge who had been persecuted for firm adherence to the House of Hanover, was, at near fifty, forced, after many solicitations and complaints, to content himself with a share in the patent of Drury Lane theatre. Steele himself says, in his celebrated letter to Congreve, that Addison, by his preference of Tickell, "incurred the warmest resentment of other gentlemen;" and everything seems to indicate that, of those resentful gentlemen, Steele was himself one.

While poor Sir Richard was brooding over what he considered as Addison's unkindness, a new cause of quarrel arose. The Whig party, already divided against itself, was rent by a new schism. The celebrated bill for limiting the number of peers had been brought in. The proud Duke of Somerset, first in rank of all the nobles whose origin permitted them to sit in Parliament, was the ostensible author of the measure. But it was supported, and, in truth, devised by the prime minister.

We are satisfied that the bill was most pernicious; and we fear that the motives which induced Sunderland to frame it were not honorable to him. But we cannot deny that it was supported by many of the best and wisest men of that age. Nor was this strange. The royal prerogative had, within the memory of the generation then in the vigor of life, been so grossly abused, that it was still regarded with a jealousy which, when the peculiar situation of the House of Brunswick is considered, may per-

haps be called immoderate. The particular prerogative of creating peers had, in the opinion of the Whigs, been grossly abused by Queen Anne's last ministry; and even the Tories admitted that her Majesty, in swamping, as it has since been called, the Upper House, had done what only an extreme case could justify. The theory of the English constitution, according to many high authorities, was that three independent powers, the sovereign, the nobility, and the commons, ought constantly to act as checks on each other. If this theory were sound, it seemed to follow that to put one of these powers under the absolute control of the other two, was absurd. But if the number of peers were unlimited, it could not well be denied that the Upper House was under the absolute control of the Crown and the Commons, and was indebted only to their moderation for any power which it might be suffered to retain.

Steele took part with the Opposition, Addison with the Ministers. Steele, in a paper called the "Plebeian," vehemently attacked the bill. Sunderland called for help on Addison, and Addison obeyed the call. In a paper called the "Old Whig," he answered, and, indeed, refuted Steele's arguments. It seems to us that the premises of both the controversialists were unsound; that, on those premises, Addison reasoned well and Steele ill, and that consequently Addison brought out a false conclusion while Steele blundered upon the truth. In style, in wit, and in politeness, Addison maintained his superior-

ity, though the Old Whig is by no means one of his happiest performances.

At first, both the anonymous opponents observed the laws of propriety. But at length Steele so far forgot himself as to throw an odious imputation on the morals of the chiefs of the administration. Addison replied with severity, but, in our opinion, with less severity than was due to so grave an offence against morality and decorum; nor did he, in his just anger, forget for a moment the laws of good taste and good breeding. One calumny, which has been often repeated and never yet contradicted, it is our duty to expose. It is asserted in the *Biographia Britannica* that Addison designated Steele as "little Dicky." This assertion was repeated by Johnson, who had never seen the Old Whig, and was therefore excusable. It has also been repeated by Miss Aikin, who has seen the Old Whig, and for whom, therefore, there is less excuse. Now, it is true that the words "little Dicky" occur in the Old Whig, and that Steele's name was Richard. It is equally true that the words "little Isaac" occur in the *Duenna*, and that Newton's name was Isaac. But we confidently affirm that Addison's little Dicky had no more to do with Steele than Sheridan's little Isaac with Newton. If we apply the words "little Dicky" to Steele, we deprive a very lively and ingenious passage not only of all its wit, but of all its meaning. Little Dicky was the nickname of Henry Norris, an actor of remarkably small stature, but of great humor, who

played the usurer Gomez, then a most popular part, in Dryden's "Spanish Friar."*

The merited reproof which Steele had received, though softened by some kind and courteous expressions, galled him bitterly. He replied with little force and great acrimony; but no rejoinder appeared. Addison was fast hastening to his grave, and had, we may well suppose, little disposition to prosecute a quarrel with an old friend. His complaint had terminated in dropsy. He bore up long and manfully. But at length he abandoned all hope, dismissed his physicians, and calmly prepared himself to die.

His works he intrusted to the care of Tickell, and dedicated them a very few days before his death to Craggs, in a letter written with the sweet and grace-

* We will transcribe the whole paragraph. How it can ever have been misunderstood is unintelligible to us.

"But our author's chief concern is for the poor House of Commons whom he represents as naked and defenceless, when the Crown, by losing this prerogative, would be less able to protect them against the power of a House of Lords. Who forbears laughing when the Spanish Friar represents little Dicky, under the person of Gomez, insulting the Colonel that was able to fright him out of his wits with a single frown? This Gomez, says he, flew upon him like a dragon, got him down, the Devil being strong in him, and gave him bastinado on bastinado, and buffet on buffet, which the poor Colonel, being prostrate, suffered with a most Christian patience. The improbability of the fact never fails to raise mirth in the audience; and one may venture to answer for a British House of Commons, if we may guess, from its conduct hitherto, that it will scarce be either so tame or so weak as our author supposes."

ful eloquence of a Saturday's Spectator. In this, his last composition, he alluded to his approaching end in words so manly, so cheerful, and so tender, that it is difficult to read them without tears. At the same time he earnestly recommended the interests of Tickell to the care of Craggs.

Within a few hours of the time at which this dedication was written, Addison sent to beg Gay, who was then living by his wits about town, to come to Holland House. Gay went, and was received with great kindness. To his amazement his forgiveness was implored by the dying man. Poor Gay, the most good-natured and simple of mankind, could not imagine what he had to forgive. There was, however, some wrong, the remembrance of which weighed on Addison's mind, and which he declared himself anxious to repair. He was in a state of extreme exhaustion; and the parting was doubtless a friendly one on both sides. Gay supposed that some plan to serve him had been in agitation at Court, and had been frustrated by Addison's influence. Nor is this improbable. Gay had paid assiduous court to the royal family. But in the queen's days he had been the eulogist of Bolingbroke, and was still connected with many Tories. It is not strange that Addison, while heated by conflict, should have thought himself justified in obstructing the preferment of one whom he might regard as a political enemy. Neither is it strange that, when reviewing his whole life, and earnestly scrutinizing all his motives, he should think that he had acted an unkind and ungenerous part, in

using his power against a distressed man of letters, who was as harmless and as helpless as a child.

One inference may be drawn from this anecdote. It appears that Addison, on his death-bed, called himself to a strict account, and was not at ease till he had asked pardon for an injury which it was not even suspected that he had committed, for an injury which would have caused disquiet only to a very tender conscience. Is it not then reasonable to infer that, if he had really been guilty of forming a base conspiracy against the fame and fortunes of a rival, he would have expressed some remorse for so serious a crime? But it is unnecessary to multiply arguments and evidence for the defence, when there is neither argument nor evidence for the accusation.

The last moments of Addison were perfectly serene. His interview with his son-in-law is universally known. "See," he said, "how a Christian can die." The piety of Addison was, in truth, of a singularly cheerful character. The feeling which predominates in all his devotional writings is gratitude. God was to him the all-wise and all-powerful friend who had watched over his cradle with more than maternal tenderness; who had listened to his cries before they could form themselves in prayer; who had preserved his youth from the snares of vice; who had made his cup run over with worldly blessings; who had doubled the value of those blessings by bestowing a thankful heart to enjoy them, and dear friends to partake them; who had rebuked the waves of the Ligurian Gulf, had purified the au-

tumnal air of the Campagna, and had restrained the avalanches of Mont Cenis. Of the Psalms, his favorite was that which represents the Ruler of all things under the endearing image of a shepherd, whose crook guides the flock safe, through gloomy and desolate glens, to meadows well watered and rich with herbage. On that goodness to which he ascribed all the happiness of his life, he relied in the hour of death with the love which casteth out fear. He died on the 17th of June, 1719. He had just entered on his forty-eighth year.

His body lay in state in the Jerusalem Chamber, and was borne thence to the Abbey at dead of night. The choir sang a funeral hymn. Bishop Atterbury, one of those Tories who had loved and honored the most accomplished of the Whigs, met the corpse, and led the procession by torchlight, round the shrine of Saint Edward and the graves of the Plantagenets, to the chapel of Henry VII. On the north side of that chapel, in the vault of the House of Albemarle, the coffin of Addison lies next to the coffin of Montague. Yet a few months, and the same mourners passed again along the same aisle. The same sad anthem was again chanted; the same vault was again opened, and the coffin of Craggs was placed close to the coffin of Addison.

Many tributes were paid to the memory of Addison; but one alone is now remembered. Tickell bewailed his friend in an elegy which would do honor to the greatest name in our literature, and which unites the energy and magnificence of Dryden to the tender-

ness and purity of Cowper. This fine poem was prefixed to a superb edition of Addison's works, which was published, in 1721, by subscription. The names of the subscribers proved how widely his fame had been spread. That his countrymen should be eager to possess his writings, even in a costly form, is not wonderful. But it is wonderful that, though English literature was then little studied on the continent, Spanish grandees, Italian prelates, marshals of France, should be found in the list. Among the most remarkable names are those of the Queen of Sweden, of Prince Eugene, of the Grand-Duke of Tuscany, of the Dukes of Parma, Modena, and Guastalla, of the Doge of Genoa, of the Regent Orleans, and of Cardinal Dubois. We ought to add that this edition, though eminently beautiful, is in some important points defective; nor, indeed, do we yet possess a complete collection of Addison's writings.

It is strange that neither his opulent and noble widow, nor any of his powerful and attached friends, should have thought of placing even a simple tablet, inscribed with his name, on the walls of the Abbey. It was not till three generations had laughed and wept over his pages, that the omission was supplied by the public veneration. At length, in our own time, his image, skilfully graven, appeared in Poet's Corner. It represents him, as we can conceive him, clad in his dressing-gown, and freed from his wig, stepping from his parlor at Chelsea into his trim little garden, with the account of the "Everlasting Club," or the "Loves of Hilpa and Shalum," just finished

for the next day's Spectator, in his hand. Such a mark of national respect was due to the unsullied statesman, to the accomplished scholar, to the master of pure English eloquence, to the consummate painter of life and manners. It was due, above all, to the great satirist, who alone knew how to use ridicule without abusing it, who, without inflicting a wound, effected a great social reform, and who reconciled wit and virtue, after a long and disastrous separation, during which wit had been led astray by profligacy, and virtue by fanaticism.



